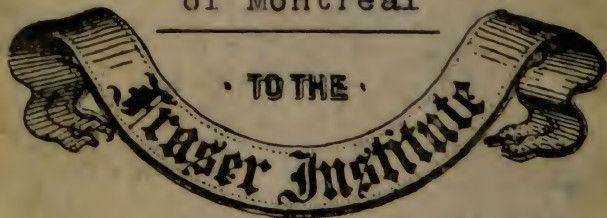




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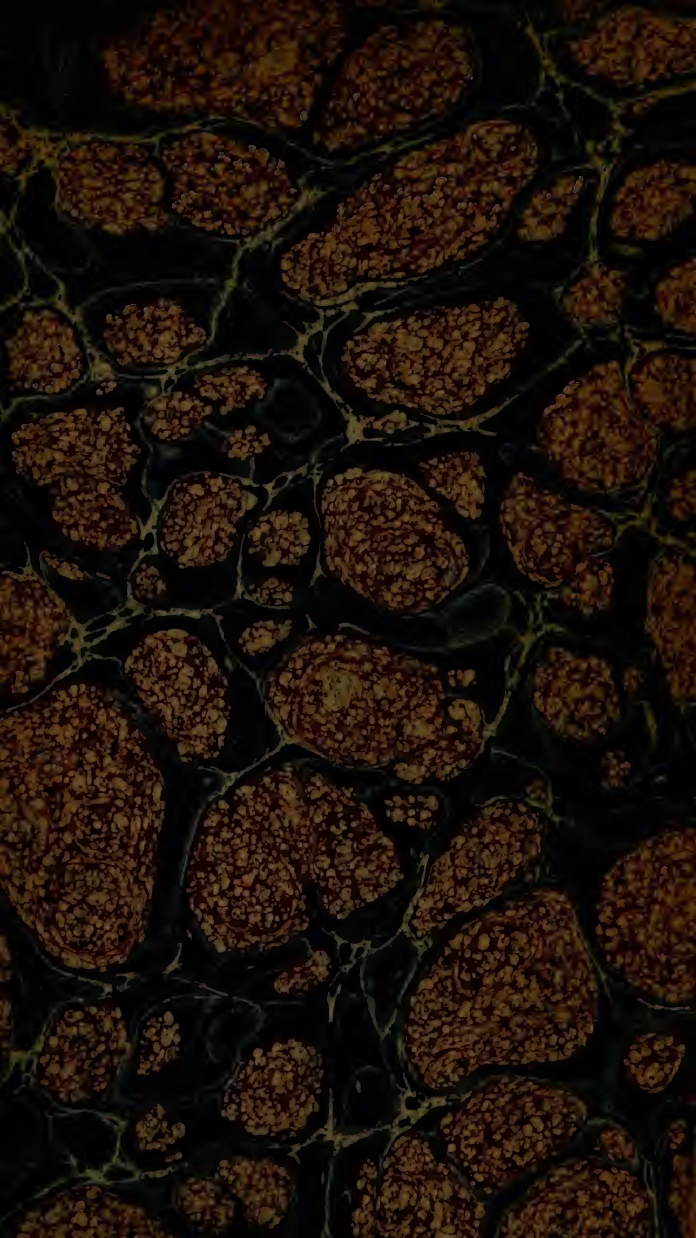
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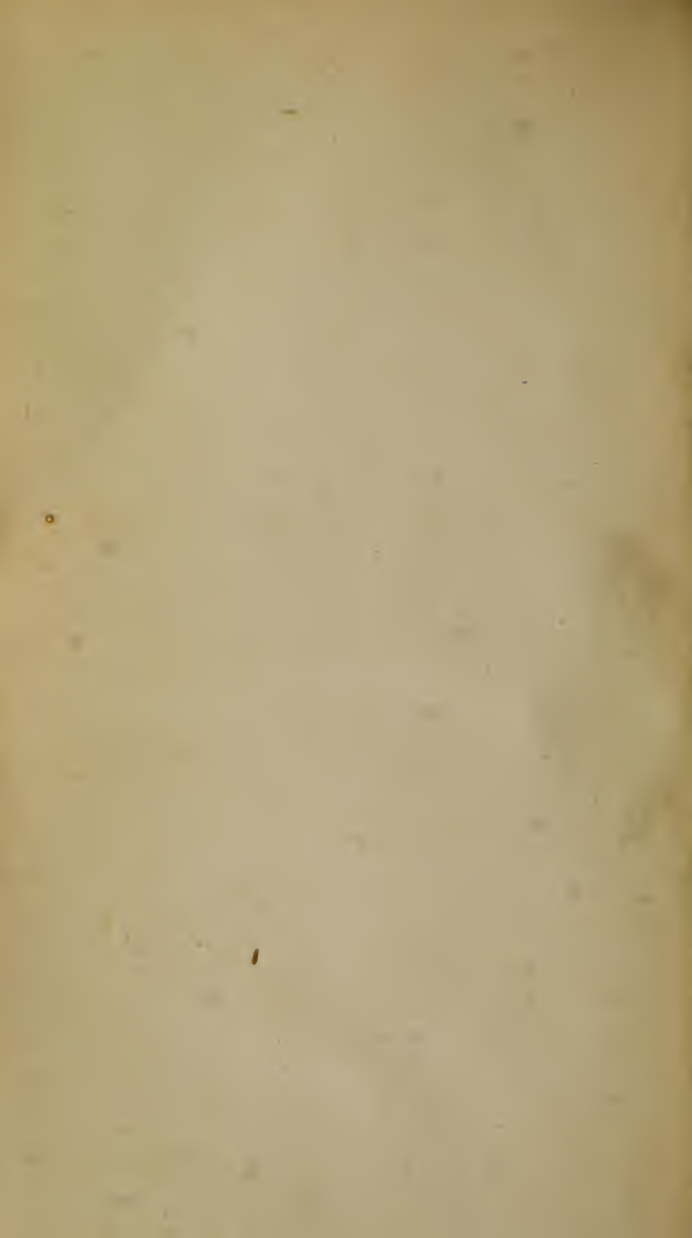
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THE
SPIRIT
OF THE
BRITISH ESSAYISTS.

VOL. VI.

CONTAINING
THE CONNOISSEUR, CITIZEN OF THE WORLD,
MIRROR, AND LOUNGER.

C. WOOD, Printer,
Poppin's Court, Fleet Street.

THE
Spirit
OF THE
BRITISH ESSAYISTS;

COMPRISING
ALL THE MOST VALUABLE PAPERS

ON EVERY SUBJECT OF
LIFE AND MANNERS:

SELECTED FROM

THE TATLER,
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IDLER,
WORLD,
CONNOISSEUR,

CITIZEN OF THE
WORLD,
MIRROR, AND
LOUNGER.

A new Edition.
IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOL. VI.

LONDON:
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1817.

C O N T E N T S

OF

VOL. VI.

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Select Papers

FROM THE

CONNOISSEUR.

Cælum ipsum petimus stultitia—

HOR.

E'en Heaven we covet by prepost'rous rules,
And form to ourselves a Paradise of fools.

IT is observed by the French, that a cat, a priest, and an old woman are sufficient to constitute a religious sect in England. So universally, it seems, are learning and genius diffused through this island, that the lowest plebeians are deep casuists in matters of faith as well as politics; and so many and wonderful are the new lights continually breaking in upon us, that we daily make fresh discoveries, and strike out unbeaten paths to future happiness. The above observation of our neighbours is in truth rather too full: for a priest is so far from necessary, that a new species of doctrine would be better received by our old women, and other well disposed good people, from a layman. The most extraordinary tenets of religion are very successfully propagated under the sanction of the leathern apron instead of the cassock: every corner of the town has a barber, mason, bricklayer, or some other handicraft teacher; and there are almost as many sects in this metropolis as there are parish churches.

As to the old women, since the passions of females are stronger in youth, and their minds weaker in age, than those of the other sex, their readiness in embracing any principles of religion, pressed on them with particular earnestness and vehemence, is not very wonderful. They hope, by the most rigid demeanour in the decline of life, to make amends for that unbounded loose given to their passions in their younger years. The same violence, however, commonly accompanies them in religion, as formerly actuated them in their pleasures; and their zeal entirely eats up their charity. They look with a malevolent kind of pity on all who are still employed in worldly undertakings, "carry prayer-books in their pockets," and piously damn all their relations and acquaintance with texts of scripture. I know an old gentlewoman of this cast, who has formed herself as a pattern of staid behaviour; and values herself for having given up at threescore the vanities of sixteen. She denounces heavy judgments on all frequenters of public diversions, and forebodes the worst consequences from every party of pleasure. I have known her foretel the ruin of her niece from a country-dance: nay, she can perceive irregular desires flaming from a gay-coloured top-knot, and has even descried adultery itself lurking beneath the thin veil of a worked apron, or beaming from a diamond girdle-buckle.

But we might perhaps suffer a few good old ladies to go to Heaven their own way, if these sects were not pernicious on many other accounts. Such strange doctrines are very apt to unsettle the minds of the common people, who often make an odd transition from infidelity to enthusiasm, and become bigots from arrant free-thinkers. Their faith, however, it may be well imagined, is not a saving faith; as they are worked up to an adoration of the Creator, from the same slavish principle that induces the In-

dians to worship the devil. It is amazing, how strongly fear operates on these weak creatures, and how easily a canting, whining rascal can mould them to his purpose. I have known many a rich tradesman wheedled and threatened out of his subsistence, and himself and unhappy family at last lectured into the workhouse. Thus do these vile hypocrites turn a poor convert's head to save his soul; and deprive him of all happiness in this world, under pretence of securing it to him eternally in the next.

Nothing can do religion more injury than these solemn mockeries of it. Many of these sects consist almost entirely of battered prostitutes, and persons of the most infamous character. Reformation is their chief pretence; wherefore the more abandoned those are, of whom they make proselytes, the more they pride themselves on their conversion. I remember a debauched young fellow, who pretended a sudden amendment of his principles, in order to repair his shattered fortune. He turned Methodist, and soon began to manifest a kind of spiritual fondness for a pious sister. He wooed her according to the directions of the rubric, sent her sermons instead of billet doux, "greeted her with an holy kiss," and obtained his mistress by appearing in every respect a thorough devote. But alas! the good gentleman could never be prevailed on to comply with religious ordinances, or appear any more at church or meeting after the performance of the marriage ceremony. The lowest of the vulgar also, for their particular ends, frequently become sectaries. They avail themselves of a mock conversion to redeem their lost characters; and, like criminals at Rome, make the church a sanctuary for villainy. By this artifice they recommend themselves to the charity of weak but well-meaning Christians, and often insinuate themselves as servants into Methodist families.

Le Sage, with his usual humour, represents Gil Blas as wonderfully charmed with the seeming sanctity of Ambrose de Lamela, when he took him into his service ; and Gil Blas is even not offended at his remissness the very first night, when his new servant tells him, that it was owing to his attending his devotions : but it soon appears that this sly valet had been employed in concerting the robbery of his master. A due attention to religion is so rare a quality in all ranks of people, that I am far from blaming it in servants : but when I see their religion showing itself in laziness, and observe them neglecting their common business under the pretext of performing acts of supererogation, I am apt to question their sincerity, and to take every servant of that kind for a mere St. Ambrose. An old Moravian aunt of mine, of whom I have formerly made worthy mention, would never have any servants, who did not belong to the society of the United Brethren. But so little did the good lady's endeavours to preserve virtue and a spirit of devotion in her house succeed, that the generality of the men fell into evil courses, and most of the pious sisterhood left the family with big bellies.

I would not be thought to deny my fellow-subjects full liberty of conscience, and all the benefits of the toleration act ; yet I cannot help regarding these weak, if not ill-meant divisions from the established church, as a dangerous kind of free-thinking ; not so shocking indeed as the impious avowal of atheism and infidelity, but often attended with same bad consequences. A religion, founded on madness and enthusiasm, is almost as bad as no religion at all ; and what is worst, the unhappy errors of particular sects expose the purest religion in the world to the scoffs of unbelievers. Shallow wittlings exercise their little talents for ridicule on matters of religion, and fall into atheism and blasphemy in order to avoid bigotry and enthusiasm. The

absurdities of the sectaries strengthen them in their ridiculous notions, and produce many other evils, as will appear from the following short history.

In the glorious reign of Queen Elizabeth there resided in these kingdoms a worthy lady called Religion. She was remarkable for the sweetness of her temper, which was cheerful without levity, and grave without moroseness. She was also particularly decent in her dress as well as behaviour; and preserved with uncommon mildness the strictest regularity in her family. Though she had a noble genius, led a very sober life, and attended church constantly every Sunday, yet in those days she kept the best company, was greatly admired by the Queen, and was even intimate with most of the maids of honour. What became of her family is not known; but it is very certain, that they have at present no connection with the polite world. Some affirm that the line is extinct: though I have indeed been told, that the late Bishop Berkely, and the present bishops of *** and *** are descended from the principal branches of it, and that some few of the family are resident on small livings in the country.

We are told by a certain fashionable author, that there were formerly two men in the mad-house at Paris, one of whom imagined himself the Father, and the other the Son. In like manner, no sooner did the good lady Religion disappear, but she was personated by a crazy old beldam, called Superstition. But the cheat was instantly discovered: for, instead of the mild discipline with which her predecessor ruled her family, she governed entirely by severity, racks, wheels, gibbets, sword, fire, and faggot. Instead of cheerfulness, she introduced gloom; was perpetually crossing herself with holy water; and, to avert the terrible judgments of which she was hourly in fear, she compiled a new almanack, in which she

wonderfully multiplied the number of red letters. After a miserable life she died melancholy mad, but left a will behind her, in which she bequeathed a very considerable sum to build an hospital for religious lunatics; which I am informed will speedily be built on the same ground where the Foundery, that celebrated Methodist meeting-house, now stands.

Superstition left behind her a son called Atheism, begot on her by a Moravian teacher at one of their lovefeasts. Atheism soon showed himself to be a most profligate, abandoned fellow. He came very early upon town, and was a remarkable blood. Among his other frolics he commenced author, and is said to have written in concert with Lord Bolingbroke. After having squandered a large fortune, he turned gamester, then pimp, and then highwayman: in which last occupation he was soon detected, taken, and thrown into Newgate. He behaved very impudently in the condemned hole, abused the ordinary whenever that gentleman attended him, and encouraged all his fellow-prisoners, in the Newgate phrase, to die hard. When he came to the gallows, instead of the psalm, he sung a bawdy catch, threw away the book, and bid Jack Ketch tuck him up like a gentleman. Many of his relations were present at the execution, and shook their heads, repeating the words of Mat in the Beggar's Opera, "Poor fellow! we are sorry for you; but it is what we must all come to."

Ætatis cujusve notandi sunt tibi mores.

HOR.

What foibles wait on life through every stage!
Our youth a wildfire, and a frost our age!

"TO MR. TOWN.

"SIR,

"NOTHING is more necessary, in order to

wear off any particularities in our behaviour, or to root out any perverseness in our opinions, than mixing with persons of ages and occupations different from our own. Whosoever confines himself entirely to the society of those who are engaged in the same pursuits, and whose thoughts naturally take the same turn with his own, acquires a certain stiffness and pedantry of behaviour, which is sure to make him disagreeable, except in one particular set of company. Instead of cramping the mind by keeping it within so narrow a circle, we should endeavour to enlarge it by every worthy notion and accomplishment; and temper each qualification with its opposite; as the four elements are compounded in our natural frame.

“The necessity of this free conversation, to open and improve the mind, is evident from the consequences, which always follow a neglect of it. The employment each man is engaged in wholly engrosses his attention, and tinges the mind with a peculiar die, which shows itself in all the operations of it, unless prevented by natural good sense or a liberal education. The physician, the lawyer, and the tradesman will appear in company, though none of these occupations are the subject of discourse; and the clergyman will grow morose and severe, who seldom or never converses with the laity. If no particular profession claims this influence over us, some darling passion or amusement gives a colour to our thoughts and actions, and makes us odious or at least ridiculous. Fine ladies for instance, by despising the conversation of sensible men, can talk about nothing but routs, balls, assemblies, birthday suits, and intrigues; and fine gentlemen, for the same reason, of almost nothing at all. In like manner the furious partizan, who has not been weaned from a mad attachment to particular principles, is weak enough to imagine every man of a different

way of thinking a fool and a scoundrel; and the sectary or zealot devotes to eternal damnation all those, who will not go to Heaven in the same road with himself, under the guidance of Whitfield, Wesley, or Zinzendorff. To the same cause we owe the rough country squire, whose ideas are only bent on guns, dogs, horses, and game; and who has every thing about him of a piece with his diversions. His hall must be adorned with stags' heads, instead of busts and statues; and in the room of family pictures, you will see prints of the most famous stallions and racehorses: all his doors open and shut with foxes' feet; and even the buttons of his clothes are impressed with the figures of dogs, foxes, stags, and horses. To this absurd practice of cultivating only one set of ideas, and shutting ourselves out from any intercourse with the rest of the world, is owing that narrowness of mind, which has infected the conversation of the polite world with insipidity, made roughness and brutality the characteristics of a mere country gentleman, and produced the most fatal consequences in politics and religion.

“ But if this commerce with the generality of mankind is so necessary to remove any impressions, which we may be liable to receive from any particular employment or darling amusement, what precautions ought to be used, in order to remedy the inconveniences naturally incident to the different ages of life! It is not certain, that a person will be engaged in any profession, or given up to any peculiar kind of pleasure; but the mind of every man is subject to the inclinations arising from the several stages of his existence, as well as his body to chronic distempers. This indeed, Mr. Town, is the principal cause of my writing to you: for it has often given me great concern to see the present division between the young and the old; to observe elderly men forming themselves into clubs and soci-

eties, that they may be more securely separated from youth; and to see young men running into dissipation and debauchery, rather than associate with age. If each party would labour to conform to the other, from such a coalition many advantages would accrue to both. Our youth would be instructed by the experience of age, and lose much of that levity which they retain too long; while at the same time the wrinkled brow of the aged would be smoothed by the sprightly cheerfulness of youth; by which they might supply the want of spirits, forget the loss of old friends, and bear with ease all their worldly misfortunes. It is remarkable, that those young men are the most worthy and sensible, who have kept up any intercourse with the old; and that those old men are of the most cheerful and amiable disposition, who have not been ashamed to converse with the young.

“ I will not pretend to decide which party is most blamable in neglecting this necessary commerce with each other; which, if properly managed, would be at once so beneficial and delightful; but it undoubtedly arises from a certain selfishness and obstinacy in both, which will not suffer them to make a mutual allowance for the natural difference of their dispositions. Their inclinations are, indeed, as different as their years; yet each expects the other to comply, though neither will make any advances. How rarely do we see the least degree of society preserved between a father and a son! a shocking reflection, when we consider that nature has endeavoured to unite them by parental affection on one side, and filial gratitude on the other. Yet a father and a son as seldom live together with any tolerable harmony, as an husband and wife; and chiefly for the same reason: for though they are both joined under the same yoke, yet they are each tugging different ways. A father might as well expect his son to be as gouty and infirm as himself,

as to have the disposition which he has contracted from age; and a son might as reasonably desire the vigour and vivacity of five-and-twenty, as his own love of gaiety and diversions in his father. It is therefore evident, that a mutual endeavour to conform to each other is absolutely requisite to keep together the cement of natural affection, which an untractable stubbornness so frequently dissolves: or at least, if it does not disturb the affection, it constantly destroys the society between father and son.

“ This unhappy and unnatural division is often the subject of complaint in persons of both ages; but is still unremedied, because neither reflect on the cause from whence it proceeds. Old men are perpetually commenting on the extreme levity of the times, and blaming the young, because they do not admire and court their company: which, indeed, is no wonder, since they generally treat their youthful companions as mere children, and expect such a slavish deference to their years, as destroys that equality by which cheerfulness and society subsists. Young men do not like to be chid by a proverb, or reproved by a wrinkle: but though they do not choose to be corrected by their grave seniors like schoolboys, they would be proud to consult them as friends: which the injudicious severity of old age seldom will permit, not designing to indulge them with so great a degree of freedom and familiarity. Youth, on the other hand, shun the company of age, complaining of the small regard and respect paid to them, though they often act with so little reserve and such unbecoming confidence as not to deserve it. Suppose the old were pleased with the natural flow of spirits and lively conversation of youth, still some respect may be challenged as due to them; nor should the decency and sobriety of their characters ever be insulted by any improper or immodest conversation.

“ I am an old man myself, Mr. Town, and I have an only boy, whose behaviour to me is unexceptionable : permit me, therefore, to dwell a moment longer on my favourite subject, and I will conclude. With what harmony might all parents and children live together, if the father would try to soften the rigour of age, and remember that his son must naturally possess those qualities, which ever accompany youth ; and if the son would in return endeavour to suit himself to those infirmities, which his father received from old age ! If they would reciprocally study to be agreeable to each other, the father would insensibly substitute affection instead of authority, and lose the churlish severity and peevishness incident to his years ; while the son would curb the unbecoming impetuosity of his youth, change his reluctance to obey into a constant attention to please, and remit much of his extreme gaiety in conformity to the gravity of his father. Wherever such a turn of mind is encouraged, there must be happiness and agreeable society : and the contrary qualities of youth and age, thus blended, compose the surest cement of affection ; as colours of the most opposite tints, by a skilful mixture, each giving and receiving certain shades, will form a picture, the most heightened and exquisite in its colouring.

“ I am, Sir, your most humble Servant,

“ JOHN BEVIL.”

Nosce omnia hæc, salus est adolescentulis.

TER.

All these to know, is safety to the youth.

THOUGH the following letter was originally written for the instruction of a young gentleman going to the university, yet as it contains several just and sensible reflections, which may be of use to many of my readers, I have willingly complied with the re-

quest of my correspondent in making it the entertainment of to-day.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ As you are now going to the university, I would not be thought to pay so ill a compliment to your own natural good sense, as to suppose, that you will not (like many young gentlemen of fortune) in some measure apply yourself to study : otherwise the time you spend there will be entirely lost ; for (as Swift very justly remarks), “ all ornamental parts of education are better taught in other places.” At the same time I do not mean, that you should commence pedant, and be continually poring on a book ; since that will rather puzzle than inform the understanding. And though I know many sprightly young gentlemen of lively and quick parts affect to despise it altogether, it will be necessary to learn something of logic ; I mean in the same manner one would learn fencing—not to attack others, but to defend one’s self. In a word, you will find it a great unhappiness, when you return hither, if you do not bring with you some taste for reading : for a mere country gentleman, who can find no society in books, will have little else to do, besides following his sports, but to sit as squire of the company, tippling among a parcel of idle wretches, whose understandings are nearly on a level with his dogs and horses.

“ It has been an established maxim, that the world will always form an opinion of persons according to the company they are known to keep. In the university, as well as in other places, there are people, whom we ought to avoid, as we would the plague : and as it is of the utmost consequence, whether you plunge at once into extravagance and debauchery, or sink gradually into indolence and stupidity, I shall point out some of these pests of society in as few words as possible.

“The first person I would caution you against is the wretch that takes delight to turn religion into ridicule: one who employs that speech which was given him by God to celebrate his praise, in questioning his very being. This, as it is impious in itself, is likewise the height of ill-manners. It is hoped there are but few of them to be met with in a place of sound doctrine and religious education: but wherever they are, they ought to be avoided as much as possible; and if they will force themselves into our company, they should be used with the same contempt, with which they have the hardiness to treat their Maker. And this I can assure you may be done safely: for I never knew any body, who pretended to be above the fear of God, but was under the most terrible apprehensions whenever attacked by man.

“The next character, whom I would advise you to shun, is the gamester, in some respects not unlike the former. The gaming-table is his shrine, and fortune his deity, nor does he ever speak or think of any other, unless by way of blasphemy, oaths, and curses, when he has had a bad run at cards or dice. He has not the least notion of friendship; but would ruin his own brother, if it might be of any advantage to himself. He, indeed, professes himself your friend; but that is only with a design to draw you in: for his trade is inconsistent with the principles of honour or justice, without which there can be no real friendship. It should, therefore, be the care of every gentleman not to hold any commerce with such people, whose acquaintance he cannot enjoy without giving up his estate.

“The next person whom you ought to beware of is a drunkard; one that takes an unaccountable pleasure in sapping his constitution, and drowning his understanding. He constantly goes senseless to bed, and rises maukish in the morning; nor can he

be easy in body or mind, till he has renewed his dose, and again put himself beyond the reach of reflection. I would, therefore, entreat you by all means to avoid an habit, which will at once ruin your health, and impair your intellects. It is a misfortune, that society should be esteemed dull and insipid without the assistance of the bottle to enliven it : so that a man cannot entirely refrain from his glass, if he keeps any company at all. But let it be remembered, that in drinking, as well as in talking, we ought always to ‘ keep a watch over the doors of our lips.’

“ A loungeur is a creature, that you will often see lolling in a coffee house, or sauntering about the streets, with great calmness, and a most inflexible stupidity in his countenance. He takes as much pains as the sot to fly from his own thoughts ; and is at length happily arrived at the highest pitch of indolence both in mind and body. He would be as inoffensive as he is dull, if it were not that his idleness is contagious ; for, like the torpedo, he is sure to benumb and take away all sense of feeling from every one, with whom he happens to come in contact.

“ It were also best to forbear the company of a wrangler, or a person of litigious temper. This sometimes arises, not from any great share of ill-nature, but from a vain pride of showing one’s parts, or skill in argumentation. It is frequently observed of young academics in particular, that they are very apt impertinently to engage people in a dispute, whether they will or not. But this is contrary to all the rules of good-breeding, and is never practised by any man of sense, that has seen much of the world. I have sometimes known a person of great sauciness, and volubility of expression, confuted by the argumentum baculinum, and both his head and his syllogism broken at the same time.

“ I need not point out to you the profligate rake or the affected coxcomb, as persons from whose company you can reap no sort of benefit. From the first the good principles, already instilled into you, will doubtless preserve you; and I am sure you have too much real sense not to despise the absurd fopperies of the latter. Noted liars are no less to be avoided, as the common pests of society. They are often of a mischievous disposition, and by their calumnies and false suggestions take a pleasure in setting the most intimate friends at variance. But if they only deal in harmless and improbable lies, their acquaintance must frequently be out of countenance for them; and if we should venture to repeat after them, I am sure it is the way to be out of countenance for ourselves.

“ But above all I must advise you never to engage, at least not with any degree of violence, in any party; be not transported with the clamorous jollity of talking patriots, beyond the sober dictates of reason and justice, nor let the insinuating voice of corruption tempt you to barter your integrity and peace of mind for the paltry satisfaction of improving your fortune. If you behave with honour and prudence, you will be regarded and courted by all parties; but if otherwise, you will certainly be despised by all. Perhaps, indeed, if you should hereafter engage in elections, and spend your own money to support another's cause, the person, in whose interest you are, may shake you by the hand, and swear you are a very honest gentleman: just as butchers treat their bull-dogs, who spit in their mouths, clap them on the back, and then halloo them on to be tossed and torn by the horns of their antagonist.

“ After having guarded you against the evil influence of our own sex, I cannot conclude without throwing in a word or two concerning the ladies.

But that I may not be thought unmannerly to the fair, I shall pass over their faults; only hoping, that their excellencies will not tempt you to precipitate a match with one much your inferior in birth and fortune, though 'endowed with every accomplishment requisite to make the marriage state happy.' In these hasty and unequal matches it sometimes happens, that mutual loves give way to mutual reproaches. We may perhaps too late repent of our bargain: and though repentance be an excellent visiting friend, when she reminds us of our past miscarriage, and prescribes rules how to avoid them for the future, yet she is a most troublesome companion, when fixed upon us for life.

" I am, dear Sir,

" Your sincere friend, &c.

" H. A."

*O nate mecum Consule Manlio,
Seu tu querelas, sive geris jocos,
Seu rixam, et insanos amores,
Seu facilem, pia testa, somnum ; —
Descende.*

HOR.

Brisk wine some hearts inspires with gladness,
And makes some droop in sober sadness ;
Makes politicians sound to battle,
And lovers of their mistress prattle ;
While with " potations bottle deep"
It lulls the serious sot to sleep.

DRINKING is one of those popular vices, which most people reckon among their venial failings; and it is thought no great blot on a man's character, to say he takes his glass rather too freely. But as those vices are most dangerous and likely to prevail, which, if not approved, are at least commonly excused, I have been tempted to examine,

whether drinking really deserves that quarter it receives from the generality of mankind : and I must own, that after a strict attention to the principal motives that induce men to become hard drinkers, as well as to the consequences, which such excesses produce, I am at a loss to account for the received maxim, that "in good wine there is truth;" and should no more expect happiness in a full bowl, than chastity in the bar of a tavern.

The incentives to this practice are some of them very shocking, and some very ridiculous: as will perhaps appear from the following characters.

Poor Heartly was blest with every noble qualification of the head and heart, and bade fair for the love and admiration of the whole world; but was unfortunately bound in a very large sum for a friend, who disappeared, and left him to the mercy of the law. The distresses, thus brought upon him by the treachery of another, threw him into the deepest despair; and he had at last recourse to drinking, to benumb (if possible) the very sense of reflection. He is miserable when sober; and when drunk, stupified and muddled: his misfortunes have robbed him of all the joys of life: and he is now endeavouring wilfully to put an end to them by a slow poison.

Tom Buck, from the first day that he was put into breeches, was always accounted a boy of spirit; and before he reached the top of Westminster school, knew the names and faces of the most noted girls upon town, tossed off his claret with a smack, and had a long tick at the tavern. When he went to Oxford, he espoused the Tory party, because they drank deepest; and he has for some years been accounted a four bottle man. He drank for fame; and has so well established his character, that he was never known to send a man

from his chambers sober, but generally laid his whole company under the table. Since his leaving the university, nobody ever acquired more reputation by electioneering; for he can see out the stoutest freeholder in England. He has, indeed, swallowed many a tun in the service of his country; and is now a sounder patriot by two bottles, than any man in the county.

Poor Wou'd-be became a debauchee through mere bashfulness, and a foolish sort of modesty, that has made many a man drunk in spite of his teeth. He contracted an acquaintance with a set of hard drinkers: and, though he would as soon choose to swallow a dose of physic, has not courage to refuse his bumper. He is drunk every night, and always sick to death the next morning, when he constantly resolves to drink nothing stronger than small beer for the future; but at night the poor fellow gets drunk again through downright modesty. Thus Wou'd-be suffers himself to be pressed into the service; and, since he has commenced a jolly fellow, is become one of the most miserable wretches upon Earth.

Honest Ned Brimmer is at present the most dismal object that ever fell a sacrifice to liquor. It was unluckily his first ambition to promote what is called good fellowship. In this undertaking he has in a very few years entirely ruined his constitution; and now stalks up and down in so piteous a condition, as might inspire his companions with more melancholy reflections than an empty bottle. He has quite lost all appetite; and he is now obliged to keep up a weak artificial heat in his body, by the same means that destroyed the natural warmth of his constitution. Rum, brandy, and usquebaugh are his diet drinks: and he may perhaps linger a few months before he falls a martyr to good fellowship.

Having thus taken a short view of the unhappy motives that induce men to become hard drinkers, few perhaps will think such reasons any recommendations to drunkenness. Nor can I imagine they will grow more fond of it, by observing what strange creatures they are during their intoxication. Shakspeare calls it "putting a devil into their mouths to steal away their brains:" and, indeed, a cup too much turns a man the wrong side out: and wine, at the same time it takes away the power of standing from the legs, deprives the mind of all sense and reflection. It is whimsical enough to consider the different effects, which wine produces on different tempers. Sometimes, like love, it makes a fool sensible and a wise man an ass; and seems to imbibe a new quality from every different body, as water takes a tincture from the ground it runs through.

Horace has with great pleasantry recapitulated the various effects of wine in a stanza, which I have placed at the head of this paper. One man grows maudlin and weeps; another becomes merry and facetious; a third quarrels, throws a bottle at his companion's head, and could run his dearest friend through the body; a fourth is mad for a girl, and falls in love with a street-walker; while to a fifth the liquor serves as an opiate, and lulls him to sleep. Shakspeare has also shown this variety of characters with great humour. Cassio cries, "Let's to business," and immediately begins to hiccup his prayers, and belches out his hopes of salvation. Justice Silence, who does not speak a word while he is sober, has no sooner swallowed the rousing cup than he roars out a catch, and grows the noisiest man in the company. It is reported to have been one of the most exquisite entertainments to the choice spirits in the beginning of this century, to get Addison and Steele together in company for the evening. Steele entertained them till he was tipsy; when the same

wine, that stupified him, only served to elevate Addison, who took up the ball just as Steele dropped it, and kept it up for the rest of the evening. They, who have never been present at a scene of this kind, may see the whole group of drunken characters displayed at one view, with infinite humour, in Hogarth's *Modern Midnight Conversation*.

Thus excess of drinking verifies all the transformations recorded in the fable of Circe's cup: and perhaps the true reason why Bacchus is always painted with horns is to intimate, that wine turns men into beasts. Indeed, if none were to indulge themselves in drinking, except those, who, like Steele and Addison, could be witty and agreeable in their cups, the number of hard drinkers would be very happily diminished. Most men have so little right to plead an excuse of this sort in vindication of their drunkenness, that wine either makes them very rude, very stupid, or very mad. It is a vulgar error to suppose, that liquor only shows ill qualities, since it also frequently creates them, and engenders notions in the mind quite foreign to its natural disposition, which are the mere effects of wine, and break out like blotches and carbuncles on the face. The disgusting appearance, which most people make when they are drunk, was what induced the Spartans to intoxicate their slaves, and show them to their children, in order to deter them from so odious a vice. In like manner, let the choice spirit, who is often seen snoring in an armed chair in a tavern, or hanging his head over the pot, reflect what a shocking figure he must have made, when he sees the drunken beggar sleeping on a bulk, or rolling in the kennel!

Whoever thus considers the motives that generally induce men to give into these excesses, and how ridiculous and unhappy they are often rendered by the effects, will hardly be tempted by the charms of a bottle: and, indeed, hard drinking is frequently one

among the many evils that arise from want of education. The dull country squire, who has not taste for literary amusements, has nothing, except his dogs and horses, but his bumper to divert him; and the town 'squire sits soaking for the same reason in a tavern. These are the common herd of Bacchus's swine: but nothing is more shocking than to see a man of sense thus destroying his parts and constitution. It not only makes a terrible innovation in his whole frame and intellects, but also robs him of the society of those like himself, with whom he should associate, and reduces him to the level of a set of wretches; since all may be admitted to his company and conversation, who are able to toss off a bumper.

These considerations are sufficient to convince us of the evils which result from hard drinking; but it will shock us still more if we reflect how much it will influence our life and conduct. Whoever is engaged in a profession, will never apply to it with success while he sticks so close to his bottle; and the tradesman, who endeavours to make business and pleasure compatible, will never be able to make both ends meet. Thus, whether health, fame, or interest is regarded, drunkenness should be avoided; and we may say with Cassio, "Every inordinate cup is unblest, and the ingredient is a devil."

— *Pater; nec jam pater* —

OVID.

O shame to ancestry! his grace's son
Owes his vile birth to Harry or to John.

"TO MR. TOWN.

"SIR,

"IT has been my good fortune to be born of a family, that is recorded in the Herald's Dictionary

as one of the most ancient in the kingdom. We are supposed to have come into England with William the Conqueror. Upon my accession some years ago to my elder brother's estate and title of a baronet, I received a visit from Rouge Dragon, Esquire, pursuivant at arms, to congratulate me upon my new rank of a Vavasour, and to know whether I should choose to bear the dexter base points of the Lady Isabella's saltire in chief, or only her sinister corners; she being one of the seventeen coheiresses of my great great great great great grandfather's fourth wife Dorothy, the daughter and sole heiress of Simon de la Frogpool, of Croakham in Suffolk. This unexpected visit must have disconcerted me to an invincible degree, if, upon recollection, I had not only remembered Mr. Rouge Dragon as a constant companion to my late brother, but as a kind of tutor in initiating him into the science of heraldry, and the civil and military achievements to which our nobility and gentry are entitled. As soon, therefore, as I could recover myself from my first surprise in hearing any unknown English language, I humbly thanked Mr. Dragon for the pains he had taken in considering my coat of arms so minutely, but hoped he would give himself no farther trouble upon my account; because I was fully determined to bear the plain shield of my grandfather Peter, without taking the least notice of Lady Isabel's saltire in chief, or even of her sinister corners.

"Be it to my shame or not, I must confess that heraldry is a science which I have never much cultivated; nor do I find it very prevalent among the fashionable studies of the age. Arms and armorial tokens may, I suppose, be regularly distinguished, and properly emblazoned, upon the family plate to which they belong; but I have observed of late, that these honourable ensigns are not confined entirely to their proper owners, but are usurped by

every body who thinks fit to take them ; insomuch that there is scarce a hackney coach in London, which is not in possession of a ducal crest, an earl's coronet, or a baronet's bloody hand. This, indeed, has often given me great offence, as it reflects a scandal on our nobility and gentry ; and I cannot but think it very indecent for a duke's coach to be seen waiting at a night cellar, or for a countess's landau to set down ladies at the door of a common bawdyhouse. I remember I was one morning disturbed at my breakfast by a fashionable rap at my door ; when, looking out of my window, I saw the coach of the lady dowager ——— drawn up before it. I was extremely surprised at so early and unexpected a visit from her ladyship ; and while I was preparing to receive her, I overheard her ladyship at high words with her coachman in my entry ; when, stepping to the staircase, I found that the coachman and her ladyship, represented in the person of one of my housemaids, were squabbling together about sixpence. This badge of nobility, assumed at random according to the fancy of the coach painter, I have found inconvenient on other occasions ; for I once travelled from London to Derby in an hired chariot, finely ornamented with a viscount's cypher and coronet ; by which noble circumstance I was compelled in every inn to pay as a lord, though I was not at that time even a simple baronet, or (in the language of my friend Mr. Dragon) arrived to the dignity of a Vavasour.

“ I have sometimes doubted, whether nobility and high rank are of that real advantage, which they are generally esteemed to be ; and I am almost inclined to think, that they answer no desirable end but as far as they indulge our vanity and ostentation. A long roll of ennobled ancestors makes, I confess, a very alluring appearance. To see coronet after coronet passing before our view in an uninterrupted

succession, is the most soothing prospect that perhaps can present itself to the eye of human pride: the exultation that we feel upon such a review takes rise in a visionary and secret piece of flattery, that as glorious, and as long or even a longer line of future coronets may spring from ourselves, as have descended from our ancestors. We read in Virgil, that Anchises, to inspire his son with the properest incitement to virtue, shows him a long race of kings, emperors, and heroes, to whom Æneas is foredoomed to give their origin; and the misery of Macbeth is made by Shakspeare to proceed less from the consciousness of guilt than from the disappointed pride, that none of his own race shall succeed him in the throne.

“The pride of ancestry, and the desire of continuing our lineage, when they tend to an incitement of virtuous and noble actions, are undoubtedly laudable; and I should perhaps have indulged myself in the pleasing reflection, had not a particular story in a French novel, which I lately met with, put a stop to all vain glories that can possibly be deduced from a long race of progenitors.

“‘A nobleman of an ancient house, of very high rank and great fortune,’ says the novelist, ‘died suddenly, and without being permitted to stop at purgatory, was sent down immediately into hell. He had not been long there before he met with his coachman Thomas, who, like his noble master, was gnashing his teeth among the damned. Thomas, surprised to behold his lordship amidst the sharpers, thieves, pickpockets, and all the canaille of hell, started and cried out in a tone of admiration, Is it possible, that I see my late master among Lucifer’s tribe of beggars, rogues, and pilferers! How much am I astonished to find your lordship in this place! Your lordship! whose generosity was so great, whose affluent housekeep-

ing drew such crowds of nobility, gentry, and friends to your table, and within your gates, and whose fine taste employed such numbers of poor in your gardens, by building temples and obelisks, and by forming lakes of water, that seemed to vie with the largest oceans of the creation! Pray, my lord, if I may be so bold, what crime has brought your lordship into this cursed assembly? Ah! Thomas, replied his lordship, with his usual condescension, I have been sent hither for having defrauded my royal master, and cheating the widows and fatherless, solely to enrich and purchase titles, honours, and estates for that ungrateful rascal, my only son. But prithee, Thomas, tell me, as thou didst always seem to be an honest, careful, sober servant, what brought thee hither? Alas! my noble lord, replied Thomas, I was sent hither for begetting that son.'

"I am, Sir, your most humble Servant,

"REGINALD FITZWORM."

I must agree with my correspondent, that the study of heraldry is at present in very little repute among us; and our nobility are more anxious about preserving the genealogy of their horses than of their own family. Whatever value their progenitors may have formerly set upon their blood, it is now found to be of no value when put into the scale and weighed against solid plebeian gold; nor would the most illustrious descendant from Cadwallader or the Irish kings scruple to debase his lineage by an alliance with the daughter of a city plumb, though all her ancestors were yeomen, and none of her family ever bore arms. Titles of quality, when the owners have no other merit to recommend them, are of no more estimation than those which the courtesy of the vulgar have bestowed on the deformed; and when I look over a long tree of descent, I sometimes fancy I can discover the real characters of sharpers, re-

probates, and plunderers of their country, concealed under the titles of dukes, earls, and viscounts.

It is well known, that the very servants, in the absence of their masters, assume the same titles; and Tom or Harry, the footman or groom of his grace, is always my lord duke in the kitchen or stables. For this reason, I have thought proper to present my reader with the pedigree of a footman, drawn up in the same sounding titles as are so pompously displayed on these occasions; and I dare say it will appear no less illustrious than the pedigrees of many families, which are neither celebrated for their actions nor distinguished by their virtues.

The family of the Skips, or Skipkennels, is very ancient and noble. The founder of it, Maitre Jacques, came into England with the Duchess of Mazarine. He was son of a prince of the blood, his mother one of the mesdames of France: this family is therefore related to the most illustrious maitres d'hotel and valets de chambre of that kingdom. Jacques had issue two sons, viz. Robert and Paul; of whom Paul, the youngest, was invested with the purple before he was eighteen, and made a bishop, and soon after became an archbishop. Robert, the elder, came to be a duke, but died without issue. Paul, the archbishop, left behind him an only daughter, Barbara, base born, who was afterwards maid of honour; and intermarrying with a lord of the bedchamber, had a very numerous issue by him, viz. Rebecca, born a week after their marriage, and died young; Joseph, first a squire, afterwards knighted, high sheriff of a county, and colonel of the militia; Peter, raised from a cabin boy to a lord of the admiralty; William, a laggot in the first regiment of guards, and a brigadier; Thomas, at first an earl's eldest son, and afterwards a brewer and lord mayor of the city of London. The several branches of this family were no less distinguished for their illustrious progeny.

Jacques, the founder, first quartered lace on his coat, and Robert added the shoulder-knot. Some of them, indeed, met with great trouble: Archbishop Paul lost his see for getting a cook-maid with child; Barbara, the maid of honour, was dismissed with a big belly; Brigadier William was killed by a chairman in a pitched battle at an ale-house; the lord of the admiralty was transported for seven years; and Duke Robert had the misfortune to be hanged at Tyburn.

Actum est : Ilicet : periisti.

TER.

Ruined and undone !

THE use of language is the ready communication of our thoughts to one another. As we cannot produce the objects, which raise ideas in our minds, we use words, which are made signs of those objects. No man could otherwise convey to another the idea of a table or chair, without pointing to those pieces of furniture; as children are taught to remember the names of things by looking at their pictures. Thus, if I wanted to mention King Charles on horseback, I must carry my companion to Charing Cross; and would I next tell him of the statue of Sir John Barnard, we must trudge back again, and he must wait for my meaning until we got to the Royal Exchange. We should be like the sages of Laputa, who, as Gulliver tells us, having substituted things for words, used to carry about them such things as were necessary to express the particular business they were to discourse on. "I have often beheld," says he, "two of those sages almost sinking under the weight of their packs, like pedlars among us: who, when they met in the streets, would lay down their loads, open their sacks, and hold conversation for an hour together; then put up their implements,

help each other to resume their burdens, and take their leave." In these circumstances a man of the fewest words could not, indeed, talk without carrying about him a much larger apparatus of conversation than is contained in the bag of the noted Yeates, or any other slight of hand artist: he could not speak of a chicken or an owl, but it must be ready in his pocket to be produced. In such a case we could not say we heard, but we saw the conversation of a friend; as in the epistolary correspondence, carried on by those pretty hieroglyphic letters, as they are called, where the picture of a deer and a woman finely dressed is made to stand for the expression of dear lady.

But the invention of words has removed these difficulties; and we may talk not only of things we have seen, but what neither we, nor the persons to whom we speak ever saw. Thus we can convey to another the idea of a battle, without being reduced to the disagreeable necessity of learning it from the cannon's mouth: and we can talk of the people in the world of the Moon, without being obliged to make use of Bishop Wilkins' artificial wings to fly thither. Words, therefore, in the ordinary course of life, are like the paper money among merchants, invented as a more ready conveyance by which the largest sums can be transmitted to the most distant places with as much ease as a letter; while the same in specie would require bags and chests, and even carts or ships to transport it. But, however great these advantages are, the use of language has brought along with it several inconveniences, as well as paper money; for as this latter is more liable to miscarry, more easily concealed, carried off, or counterfeited than bullion, merchants have frequent causes to complain, that the convenience of this sort of cash is not without its alloy of evil; and we find, that in the use of language there is so much room for

deceit and mistake, that though it does not render it useless, it is much to be wished some remedy could be contrived.

Men are so apt to use the same words in different senses, and call the same thing by different names, that oftentimes they cannot understand others, or be themselves understood. If one calls that thing black which another calls green, or that prodigality which another calls generosity, they mistake each other's meaning, and can never agree, till they explain the words. It is to this we owe so much wrangling in discourse, and so many volumes of controversy on almost every part of literature. I have known a dispute carried on with great warmth, and when the disputants have come to explain what each meant, it has been discovered they were both of a side: like the men in the play, who met and fought first, and, after each had been heartily beaten, found themselves to be friends. What should we say, if this practice of calling things by a wrong name was to obtain among tradesmen? If you was to send to your haberdasher for an hat, you might receive a pair of stockings; or instead of a cordial julep from your apothecary, be furnished with a cathartic or a clyster.

It would be needless to insist upon the inconveniencies arising from the misuse or misapprehension of terms in all verbial combats; whether they be fought on the spot by word of mouth, or (like a game of chess) maintained, even though lands and seas interpose, by the assistance of the press. In our ordinary conversation, it is notorious, that no less confusion has arisen from the wrong application or perversion of the original and most natural import of words. I remember, when I commenced author, I published a little pamphlet, which I flattered myself had some merit, though I must confess it did not sell. Conscious of my growing fame, I re-

solved to send the first fruits of it to an uncle in the country, that my relations might judge of the great honour I was likely to prove to the family: but how was I mortified, when the good man sent me word, "that he was sorry to find I had ruined myself, and had wrote a book: for the parson of the parish had assured him, that authors were never worth a farthing, and always died in a gaol." Notwithstanding this remonstrance, I have still persisted in my ruin; which at present I cannot say is quite completed, as I can make two meals a-day, have yet a coat to my back, with a clean shirt for Sundays at least, and am lodged somewhat below a garret. However, this prediction of my uncle has often led me to consider, in how many senses, different from its general acceptation, the word ruined is frequently made use of. When we hear this word applied to another, we should naturally imagine the person is reduced to a state worse than he was in before, and so low that it is scarce possible for him to rise again; but we shall often find, instead of his being undone, that he has rather met with some extraordinary good fortune: and that those, who pronounce him ruined, either mean you should understand it in some other light, or else call him undone, because he differs from them in his way of life, or because they wish him to be in that situation. I need not point out the extreme cruelty, as well as injustice, in the misapplication of this term: as it may literally ruin a man by destroying his character: according to the old English proverb, "Give a dog an ill name, and hang him."

Most people are, indeed, so entirely taken up with their own narrow views, that, like the jaundiced eye, every thing appears to them of the same colour. From this selfish prejudice they are led to make a wrong judgment of the motives and actions of others: and it is no wonder that they should see

ruin staring every man in the face, who happens not to think as they do: I shall, therefore, here set down a catalogue of some of my own acquaintance, whom the charity and good-nature of the world have not scrupled to pronounce absolutely ruined.

A young clergyman of Cambridge might have had a good college living in about thirty years' time, or have been head of the house: but he chose to quit his fellowship for a small cure in town, with a view of recommending himself by his preaching Ruined.

A fellow of another college in the same university refused to quit his books and his retirement, to live as chaplain with a smoaking, drinking, swearing, fox-hunting country squire, who would have provided for him Ruined.

Dr. Classic, a young physician from Oxford, might have had more practice than Radcliffe or Mead: but having studied Aristotle's Poetics, and read the Greek tragedies, as well as Galen and Hippocrates, he was tempted to write a play, which was universally applauded, and the author was Ruined.

A student of the Temple might have made sure of a judge's robes, or the chancellor's seals; but being tired of sauntering in Westminster Hall without even getting half a guinea for a motion, he has accepted of a commission in one of the new raised regiments, and is Ruined.

A younger brother of a good family threw himself away upon an obscure widow with a jointure of five hundred pounds *per annum* by which he is Ruined.

Another, a man of fortune, fell in love with, and married a genteel girl without a farthing; and though she makes him an excellent wife, he is universally allowed to have Ruined himself.

Before I conclude, I cannot but take notice of

the strange sense, in which a friend of mine once heard this word used in company by a girl of the town. The young creature, being all life and spirits, engrossed all the conversation to herself; and herself indeed was the subject of all the conversation; but what most surprised him, was the manner in which she used this word ruined; which occurred frequently in her discourse, though never intended by her to convey the meaning generally affixed to it. It served her sometimes as an æra to determine the date of every occurrence. "She bought such a gown, just after she was ruined." "The first time she saw Garrick in *Ranger*, she was in doubt whether it was before or after she was ruined." Having occasion to mention a young gentleman, she burst into raptures. "O he is a dear creature! He it was that ruined me. O, he is a dear soul! He carried me to an inn ten miles from my father's house in the country, where he ruined me. If he had not ruined me, I should have been as miserable and as moping as my sisters. But the dear soul was forced to go abroad upon his travels, and I was obliged to come upon the town, three weeks after I was ruined—no, not so much as three weeks after I was ruined—yes, it was full three weeks after I was ruined."

Gaudet equis, canibusque, et aprici gramine campi.

HOR.

To spring a covey, or unearth a fox,
In reverend sportsmen, is right orthodox.

MY Cousin Village, from whom I had not heard for some time, has lately sent me an account of a country parson, which I dare say will prove entertaining to my town readers; who can have no other idea of our clergy than what they have

collected from the spruce and genteel figures which they have been used to contemplate here in doctors' scarfs, pudding sleeves, starched bands, and feather top grizzles. It will be found, from my cousin's description, that these reverend ensigns of orthodoxy are not so necessary to be displayed among rustics; and that, when they are out of the pulpit or surplice, the good pastors may, without censure, put on the manners as well as dress of a groom or whipper-in.

"Doncaster, Jan. 14, 1756.

"DEAR COUSIN,

"I am just arrived here, after having paid a visit to our old acquaintance Jack Quickset, who is now become the Reverend Mr. Quickset, Rector of — parish, in the North Riding of this county; a living worth upwards of three hundred pounds *per annum*. As the ceremonies of ordination have occasioned no alteration in Jack's morals or behaviour, the figure he makes in the church is somewhat remarkable: but as there are many other incumbents of country livings, whose clerical characters will be found to tally with his, perhaps a slight sketch, or, as I may say, rough draught of him, with some account of my visit, will not be unentertaining to your readers.

"Jack, hearing that I was in this part of the world, sent me a very hearty letter, informing me, that he had been double japped (as he called it) about a year ago, and was the present incumbent of —; where, if I would favour him with my company, he would give me a cup of the best Yorkshire Stingo, and would engage to show me a noble day's sport, as he was in a fine open country, with plenty of foxes. I rejoiced to hear he was so comfortably settled, and set out immediately for his living. When I arrived within the gate, my ears

were alarmed with such a loud chorus of "No mortals on earth are so jovial as we," that I began to think I had made a mistake; but its close neighbourhood to the church soon convinced me that this could be no other than the parsonage house. On my entrance, my friend (whom I found in the midst of a room full of foxhunters in boots and bob wigs) got up to welcome me to ———, and embracing me, gave me the full flavour of his stingo by belching in my face as he did me the honour of saluting me. He then introduced me to his friends; and placing me at the right hand of his own elbow chair, assured them that I was a very honest cock, and loved a chace of five-and-twenty miles an end as well as any of them: to preserve the credit of which character, I was obliged to comply with an injunction to toss off a pint bumper of port, with the foot of the fox dipped and squeezed into it, to give a zest to the liquor.

"The whole economy of Jack's life is very different from that of his brethren. Instead of having a wife and an house full of children (the most common family of a country clergyman) he is single; unless we credit some idle whispers in the parish, that he is married to his housekeeper. The calm amusements of piquet, chess, and backgammon, have no charms for Jack, who sees his "dearest action in the field," and boasts, that he has a brace of as good hunters in his stable as ever leg was laid over. Hunting and shooting are the only business of his life; fox hounds and pointers lay about in every parlour; and he is himself, like Pistol, always in boots. The estimation in which he holds his friends is rated according to their excellence as sportsmen; and to be able to make a good shot, or hunt a pack of hounds well, are the most recommending qualities. His parishioners often earn a shilling and a cup of ale at his house,

by coming to acquaint him that they have found an hare sitting, or a fox in cover. One day, while I was alone with my friend, the servant came in to tell him, that the clerk wanted to speak with him. He was ordered in; but I could not help smiling, when (instead of giving notice of a burying, christening, or some other church business, as I expected) I found the honest clerk came only to acquaint his reverend superior, that there was a covey of partridges, of a dozen brace at least, not above three fields from the house.

“Jack’s elder brother, Sir Thomas Quickset, who gave him the benefice, is lord of the manor; so that Jack has full power to beat up the game unmolested. He goes out three times a week with his brother’s hounds, whether Sir Thomas hunts or not; and has besides a deputation from him as lord of the manor, consigning the game to his care, and empowering him to take away all guns, nets, and dogs, from persons not duly qualified. Jack is more proud of his office than many other country clergymen are of being in the commission of the peace. Poaching is, in his eye, the most heinous crime in the two tables; nor does the care of souls appear to him half so important a duty as the preservation of the game.

“Sunday, you may suppose, is as dull and tedious to this ordained sportsman as to any fine lady in town: not that he makes the duties of his function any fatigue to him, but as this day is necessarily a day of rest from the usual toils of shooting and the chase. It happened, that the first Sunday after I was with him he had engaged to take care of a church, which was about twenty miles off, in the absence of a neighbouring clergyman. He asked me to accompany him; and the more to encourage me, he assured me, that we should ride over as fine a champaign open country as any in the north.

Accordingly I was roused by him in the morning before day-break, by a loud hallooing of "Hark to Merriman," and the repeated smacks of his half hunter; and after we had fortified our stomachs with several slices of hung beef and a horn or two of stingo, we sallied forth. Jack was mounted upon a hunter, which he assured me was never yet thrown out: and as we rode along, he could not help lamenting that so fine a soft morning should be thrown away upon a Sunday; at the same time remarking that the dogs might run breast high.

"Though we made the best of our way over hedge and ditch, and took every thing, we were often delayed by trying if we could prick a hare, or by leaving the road to examine a piece of cover; and he frequently made me stop, while he pointed out the particular course that Reynard took, or the spot where he had earthed. At length we arrived on full gallop at the church, where we found the congregation waiting for us; but as Jack had nothing to do but to alight, pull his band out of the sermon case, give his brown scratch bob a shake, and clap on the surplice, he was presently equipped for the service. In short, he behaved himself, both in the desk and pulpit, to the entire satisfaction of all the parish, as well as the 'squire of it; who, after thanking Jack for his excellent discourse, very cordially took us home to dinner with him.

"I shall not trouble you with an account of our entertainment at the 'squire's; who being himself as keen a sportsman as ever followed a pack of dogs, was hugely delighted with Jack's conversation. Church and King, and another particular toast (in compliment, I suppose, to my friend's clerical character) were the first drank after dinner; but these were directly followed by a pint bumper to "Horses sound, Dogs healthy, Earths

stopt, and Foxes plenty.' When we had run over again, with great joy and vociferation, as many chaces as the time would permit, the bell called us to evening prayers; after which, though the 'squire would fain have had us stay and take a hunt with him, we mounted our horses at the church door, and rode home in the dark; because Jack had engaged to meet several of his brother sportsmen, who were to lie all night at his own house, to be in readiness to make up for the loss of Sunday, by going out a cock shooting very early the next morning.

"I must leave it to you, cousin, to make what reflections you please on this character; only observing, that the country can furnish many instances of these ordained sportsmen, whose thoughts are more taken up with the stable or the dog-kennel than the church; and indeed, it will be found that our friend Jack and all of his stamp are regarded by their parishioners, not as parsons of the parish, but rather as 'squires in orders.

"I am, Dear Cousin, yours, &c."

*Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre
Errare, atque viam palantes quærere vitæ.*

LUCRET.

Here each profession, and its tribe we view;
Some toiling in the old, and some inventing new.

THOSE parents, who are unable to give their sons an estate, regard the educating them to one of the three great professions of law, physic, and divinity, as putting them in the high road to acquire one. Hence it happens, that nineteen parts out of twenty of our young men are brought up with a view to Lambeth, the Seals, or Warwick Lane. But alas! their hopes and expectations of rising by their pro-

fessions are often frustrated; and the surprising numbers engaged in running the same race, necessarily jostle one another. For though the courts of justice are tolerably supplied with matters of litigation; though there are many invalids and valetudinarians; and though great part of England is laid out in church preferments; yet there is not in all the kingdom sufficient matter for legal contention to employ a tenth part of those who have been trained to engross deeds in their chambers, or to harangue at the bar: the number of patients bears no proportion to the swarms of the faculty, nor would it, though a consultation were to sit on every sick man, like carrion flies upon a carcase: and the prodigious number of reverend divines infinitely exceeds that of those bishoprics, deanries, prebends, rectories, vicarages, &c. which, when they are ordained, they conceive it to be part of their holy office to fill. From these frequent failures in each of the professions, the younger sons of great men often wish that they had been permitted to disgrace the family by some mercantile, or more plebeian occupation; while the son of the mechanic curses the pride of his father, who, instead of securing him a livelihood in his own business, has condemned him to starve in pudding sleeves, that he may do honour to his relations by being a gentleman.

The three professions, being thus crowded with more candidates for business and preferment than can possibly be employed or promoted, has occasioned several irregularities in the conduct of the followers of each of them. The utter impossibility of supporting themselves in the usual method of practising law, physic, or divinity, without clients, patients, or parishioners, has induced the labourers in each of those vocations to seek out new veins and branches. The young solicitor, who finds he has nothing to do now he is out of his clerkship, offers

his assistance in the transaction of all law affairs, by the public papers, and, like the advertising tailors, promises to work cheaper than any of his brethren: while the young barrister, after having exhibited his tye-wig in Westminster Hall during several terms to no purpose, is obliged to forego the hope of rivaling Murray and Coke, and content himself with being the oracle of the courts of Carolina or Jamaica. The graduate in medicine, finding himself unsolicited for prescription or advice, and likely to starve by practising physic *secundum artem*, flies in the face of the college, and professes to cure all diseases by nostrums unmentioned in the dispensatory. He commences a thriving quack, and soon makes his way through the important medical degrees of walking on foot, riding on horseback, dispensing his drugs from a one horse chaise, and, lastly, lolling in a chariot. The divine, without living, cure, or lectureship, may perhaps incur transportation for illegal marriages, set up a theatrical oratorical Billingsgate chapel under the shelter of the toleration act and the butchers of Clare Market, or kindle the inward light in the bosoms of the Saints of Moorfields, and the Magdalens of Broad St. Giles's.

But notwithstanding these shoots engrafted as it were into the main body of the professions, it is still impossible for the vast multitude of divines, lawyers, and physicians to maintain themselves, at any rate, within the pale of their respective employments. They have often been compelled, at least, to call in adventitious ones; and have sometimes totally abandoned their original undertakings. They have frequently made mutual transitions into the occupations of each other, or have perhaps embraced other employments; which, though distinct from all three, and not usually dignified with the title of professions, may fairly be considered in that light; since

they are the sole means of support to many thousands, who toiled in vain for a subsistence in the three capital ones. On these professions, and their various followers, I shall here make some observations.

The first of these professions is an Author. The mart of literature is, indeed, one of the chief resorts of unbeneficed divines, and lawyers and physicians without practice. There are at present in the world of authors, doctors of physic, who (to use the phrase of one of them) have no great fatigue from the business of their profession: many clergymen, whose sermons are the most inconsiderable part of their compositions: and several gentlemen of the inns of court, who, instead of driving the quill over skins of parchment, lead it through all the mazes of modern novels, critiques, and pamphlets. Many likewise have embraced this profession, who were never bred to any other: and I might also mention the many bankrupt tradesmen and broken artificers, who daily enter into this new way of business, if by pursuing it in the same mechanical manner as their former occupations they might not rather be regarded as following a trade than a profession.

The second of these professions is a Player. The ingenious gentlemen, who assume the persons of the drama, are composed of as great a variety of characters as those they represent. The history of the stage might afford many instances of those, who in the trade of death might have slain men, have yet condescended to deal counterfeit slaughters from their right hands, and administer harmless phials and bowls of poison. We might read also of persons, whose fists were intended to beat the "drum ecclesiastic," who have, with unexpected spirit, become theatrical volunteers. In regard to the law, many, who were originally designed to manifest their talents for elocution in Westminster-Hall, have dis-

played them in Drury-Lane ; and, it may be added, on theatrical authority, that

Not e'en attorneys have this rage withstood,
But changed the pens for truncheons, ink for blood,
And, strange reverse !—died for their country's good.

I will not so far affront those gentlemen who were ever engaged in the study of the three honourable professions of Law, Physic, and Divinity, as to suppose that any of them have ever taken up the more fashionable employment of a Pimp ; yet it is certain, that this is a very common and lucrative profession, and that very many provide themselves with the necessaries of life, by administering to the pleasures of others. A convenient cousin, sister, or wife, has sometimes proved the chief means of making a fortune : and the tongue of slander has often ventured to affirm, that the price of procuration has been paid with a place or a bishopric.

The most advantageous and genteel of all professions is Gaming. Whoever will make this science his study, will find it the readiest way to riches, and most certain passport to the best company ; for the polite world will always admit any one to their society who will condescend to win their money. The followers of this profession are very numerous : which is indeed no wonder, when we reflect on the numbers it supports in ease and affluence, at no greater pains than packing the cards or cogging the dice, and no more risk than being sometimes tweaked by the nose, or kicked out of company ; besides which, this profession daily receives new lustre from the many persons of quality that follow it, and crowd into it with as much eagerness as into the army. Among Gamesters may also be found Lawyers, who get more by being masters of all the Cases in Hoyle, than by their knowledge of those recorded in the report books ; Physicians, the chief

object of whose attention is the circulation of the E O table ; and Divines, who, we may suppose, were hinted at by a famous wit in a certain assembly, when, among the other benefits resulting from a double tax upon dice, he thought fit to enumerate, that it might possibly prevent the clergy from playing at backgammon.

But the more danger the more honour : and therefore no profession is more honourable than that of a highwayman. Who the followers of this profession are, and with what success they practise it, I will not pretend to relate ; as the memoirs of several of them have been already penned by the Ordinary of Newgate, and as it is to be hoped that the lives of all the present practitioners will be written hereafter by that faithful historian. I shall therefore only say, that the present spirit of dissoluteness and freethinking must unavoidably bring this honourable profession more and more into vogue, and that every sessions may soon be expected to afford an instance of a gentleman highwayman.

Hæc Stultitia parit civitates, hæc constant imperia, magistratus, religio, consilia, judicia, nec aliud omnino est vita humana, quam Stultitiæ lusus quidam.

ERASM.

Nonsense o'er empires and o'er states presides ;
Our judgment, councils, laws, religion, guides ;
All arts and sciences despotic rules,
And Life itself's a Drama played by Fools.

THERE is no race of people that has been more conspicuous in almost every relation of life than the illustrious family of Nonsense. In every age of the world they have shone forth with uncommon lustre, and have made a wonderful progress in all the arts and sciences. They have at different seasons delivered speeches from the throne, harangued at

the bar, debated in parliament, and gone amazing lengths in philosophical inquiries and metaphysical disquisitions. In a word, the whole history of the world, moral and political, is but a Cyclopædia of Nonsense. For which reason, considering the dignity and importance of the family, and the infinite service it has been of to me and many of my contemporaries, I have resolved to oblige the public with a kind of abstract of the history of Nonsense.

Nonsense was the daughter of Ignorance, begot on Falsehood, many ages ago, in a dark cavern in Bœotia. As she grew up she inherited all the qualities of her parents: she discovered too warm a genius to require being sent to school; but while other dull brats were poring over an horn-book, she amused herself with spreading fantastical lies, taught her by her mamma, and which have in later ages been familiarly known to us under the names of Sham, Banter, and Humbug. When she grew up, she received the addresses and soon became the wife of Impudence. Who he was, or of what profession, is uncertain: some say he was the son of Ignorance by another venter, and was suffered to become the husband of Nonsense in those dark ages of the world, as the Ptolemys of Egypt married their own sisters. Some record that he was in the army; others that he was an interpreter of the laws; and others, a divine. However this was, Nonsense and Impudence were soon inseparably united to each other, and became the founders of a more noble and numerous family than any yet preserved on any tree of descent whatsoever; of which ingenious device they were said to have been the first inventors.

It is my chief intent at present to record the great exploits of that branch of the family, who have made themselves remarkable in England; though

they began to signalize themselves very early, and are still very flourishing in most parts of the world. Many of them were Egyptian priests four thousand years ago, and told the people that it was religion to worship dogs, monkeys, and green leeks; and their descendants prevailed on the Greeks and Romans to build temples in honour of supposed deities, who were, in their own estimation of them, whores and whoremongers, pickpockets and drunkards. Others rose up some ages after in Turkey, and persuaded the people to embrace the doctrine of bloodshed and of the sword, in the name of the most merciful God: and others have manifested their lineal descent from Nonsense and Impudence, by affirming that there is no God at all. There were also among them many shrewd philosophers; some of whom, though they were racked with the fit of the stone, or laid up with a gouty toe, declared that they felt not the least degree of pain; and others would not trust their own eyes; but when they saw an horse or a dog, could not tell whether it was not a chair or a table; and even made a doubt of their own existence.

We have no certain account of the progress of Nonsense here in England, till after the Reformation. All we hear of her and her progeny before that period of time is, that they led a lazy life among the monks in cloisters and convents, dreaming over old legends of saints, drawing up breviaries and mass-books, and stringing together some barbarous Latin verses in rhyme. In the days of Queen Elizabeth, so little encouragement was given to her family, that it seemed to have been almost extinct; but in the succeeding reign it flourished again, and filled the most considerable offices in the nation. Nonsense became a great favourite at court, where she was highly caressed on account of her wit, which consisted in puns and quibbles; and the bonny

monarch himself was thought to take a more than ordinary delight in her conversation. At this time many of her progeny took orders, and got themselves preferred to the best livings, by turning the Evangelists into punsters, and making St. Paul quibble from the pulpit. Among the rest, there was a bishop, a favourite son of Nonsense, of whom it is particularly recorded, that he used to tickle his courtly audience, by telling them that matrimony was become a matter of money: with many other right reverend jests recorded in Joe Miller. Several brothers of this family were likewise bred to the bar, and very gravely harangued against old women sucked by devils in the shape of ram-cats, &c. As an instance of the profound wisdom and sagacity of the legislature in those days, I need only mention that just and truly pious act of parliament made against the crying sin of witchcraft, 1 Jac. i, chap. 12, "Such as shall use invocation or conjuration of any evil spirit, or shall consult, covenant with, entertain, employ, fee, or reward any evil spirit to any intent, or take up any dead person or part thereof, to be used in witchcraft, or have used any of the said arts, whereby any person shall be killed, consumed, or lamed in his or her body, they, together with their accessaries before the fact, shall suffer as felons, without benefit of clergy."

In the troublesome times of King Charles the First, Nonsense and her family sided with the Parliament. These set up new sects in religion: some of them cropped their hair short, and called themselves the Enlightened; some fell into trances, and pretended to see holy visions; while others got into tubs, and held forth with many whinings and groans, and snuffling through the nose. In the merry days of King Charles the Second, Nonsense assumed a more gay and libertine air; and her progeny from fanatics became downright infidels. Several courtiers

of the family wrote lewd plays, as well as luscious love songs, and other loose verses, which were collected together, and greedily bought up in miscellanies. In the succeeding reign, some of the kindred, who had received their education at St. Omer's, thought themselves on the point of establishing Nonsense in church and state, and were preparing to make bonfires on the occasion in Smithfield, when they were obliged to leave the kingdom.

Since the Revolution, the field of politics has afforded large scope for Nonsense and her family to make themselves remarkable. Hence arose the various sects in party, distinguished by the names of Whig and Tory, Ministerial and Jacobite, Sunderlandians, Oxfordians, Godolphinians, Bolingbrokians, Walpolians, Pelhamians, &c. &c. &c. names which have kindled as hot a war in pamphlets and journals as the Quelphs and Gibilines in Italy, or the big and little Endians in the kingdom of Lilliput.

I have here endeavoured to give a short abridgment of the history of Nonsense; though a very small part of the exploits of the family can be included in so compendious a chronicle. Some of them were very deep scholars, and filled the Professors' Chairs at the Universities. They composed many elaborate dissertations, to convince the world that two and two make four; and discovered by dint of syllogism, that white is not black! Their inquiries in Natural Philosophy were no less extraordinary: many spent their lives and their fortunes in attempting to discover a wonderful stone, that should turn every baser metal into gold; and others employed themselves in making artificial wings, by the help of which they should fly up into the world of the moon. Another branch of the family took to the Belles Lettres; and were the original founders of the learned society of Grub Street.

Never was any æra in the annals of Nonsense

more illustrious than the present; nor did that noble family ever more signally distinguish itself in every occupation. In oratory, who are greater proficient than the progeny of Nonsense? Witness many long and eloquent speeches delivered in St. Stephen's Chapel, in Westminster, at Assizes and Quarter Sessions, at Clare Market, and the Robin Hood. In Philosophy, what marvellous things have not been proved by Nonsense! The sometime professor of astronomy at Gresham College showed Sir Isaac Newton to be a mere ass, and wire-drawed the book of Moses into a complete system of natural philosophy. Lifeguard-men have, with the utmost certainty of Nonsense, foretold earthquakes; and others have penned curious essays on airquakes, waterquakes, and comets. In Politics, how successfully have the sons of Nonsense bandied about the terms of court and country! How wisely have they debated upon taxes! And with what amazing penetration did they but lately foresee an invasion! In Religion, their domain is particularly extensive: for though Nonsense is excluded, at least from the first part of the service, in all regular churches, yet she often occupies the whole ceremony at the Tabernacle and Foundery in Moorfields, and the chapel in Long Acre. But for the credit of so polite an age be it known, that the children of Nonsense, who are many of them people of fashion, are as often seen at the playhouse as at church: and it is something strange, that the family of Nonsense is now divided against itself, and in high contest about the management of their favourite amusement—the opera.

*Accipe, per longos tibi qui deserviat annos :
 Accipe, qui pura norit amare fide.
 Est nulli cessura fides ; sine crimine mores ;
 Nudaque simplicitas, purpureusque pudor.
 Non mihi mille placent ; non sum desultor amoris ;
 Tu mihi (si qua fides) Sura perennis eris.*

OVID.

Scorn me not, Chloe ; me, whose faith, well tried,
 Long years approve, and honest passions guide.
 My spotless soul no foul affections move,
 But chaste simplicity, and modest love.
 Nor I, like shallow fops, from fair to fair
 Roving at random, faithless passion swear,
 But thou alone shalt be my constant care.

ALMOST every man is or has been, or at least thinks that he is or has been, a lover. One has fought for his mistress, another drank for her, another wrote for her, and another has done all three ; and yet, perhaps, in spite of their duels, poetry, and bumpers, not one of them ever entertained a sincere passion. I have lately taken a survey of the numerous tribe of Enamoratos, and, after having observed the various shapes they wear, think I may safely pronounce, that, though all profess to have been in love, there are very few who are really capable of it.

It is a maxim of Rochefoucault's, that " many men would never have been in love if they had never heard of love." The justice of this remark is equal to its shrewdness. The ridiculous prate of a family has frequently great influence on young minds, who learn to love, as they do every thing else, by imitation. Young creatures, almost mere children, have been consumed with this second-hand flame lighted up at another's passion ; and, in consequence of the loves of the footman and chambermaid, I have known little master fancy himself a dying swain at the age

of thirteen, and little miss pining away with love in a bib and hanging-sleeves.

Those vast heaps of volumes, filled with love, and sufficient in number to make a library, are great inflamers, and seldom fail to produce that kind of passion described by Rochefoucault. The chief of these literary seducers are the old romances, and their degenerate spawn, the modern novels. The young student reads of the emotions of love till he imagines that he feels them throbbing and fluttering in his little breast; as valetudinarians study the history of a disease till they fancy themselves affected with every symptom of it. For this reason I am always sorry to see any of this trash in the hands of young people. I look upon Cassandra and Cleopatra, as well as Betty Barnes, Polly Willis, &c. as no better than bawds; and consider Don Bellianus of Greece, and Sir Amadis de Gaul, with George Edwards, Loveill, &c. as arrant pimps. But though romances and novels are both equally stimulatives, yet their operations are very different. The romantic student becomes a fond Corydon of Sicily, or a very Damon of Arcadia, and is in good truth such a dying swain, that he believes he shall hang himself on the next willow, or drown himself in the next pond, if he should lose the object of his wishes. But the young novelist turns out more a man of the world; and after having gained the affections of his mistress, forms an hundred schemes to secure the possession of her, and to sham her relations.

There are, among the tribe of lovers, a sort of lukewarm gentlemen, who can hardly be said, in the language of love, to entertain a flame for their mistress. These are your men of superlative delicacy and refinement, who loath the gross ideas annexed to the amours of the vulgar, and aim at something more spiritualized and sublime. The philosophers in love doat on the mind alone of their mistress, and

would fain see her naked soul divested of its material encumbrances. Gentlemen of this complexion might perhaps not improperly be ranged in the romantic class; but they have assumed to themselves the name of Platonic lovers.

Platonism, however, is in these days very scarce; and there is another class, infinitely more numerous, composed of a sort of lovers whom we may justly distinguish by the title of Epicureans. The principles of this sect are diametrically opposite to those of the Platonics. They think no more of the soul of their mistress than a Mussulman, but are in raptures with her person. A lover of this sort is in perpetual extasies: his passion is so violent, that he even scorches you with the flame; and he runs over the perfections of his mistress in the same style that a jockey praises his horse: "Such limbs! such eyes! such a neck and breast! such— Oh, she's a rare piece!" Their ideas go no farther than mere external accomplishments; and, as their wounds may be said to be only skin-deep, we cannot allow their breasts to be smitten with love, though perhaps they may rankle with a much grosser passion. Yet it must be owned, that nothing is more common than for gentlemen of this cast to be involved in what is called a love-match; but then it is owing to the same cause with the marriage of Sir John Brute, who says, "I married my wife because I wanted to lie with her, and she would not let me."

Other gentlemen, of a gay disposition and warm constitution, who go in the catalogue for lovers, are adorers of almost every woman they see. The flame of love is as easily kindled in them as the sparks are struck out of a flint, and it also expires as soon. A lover of this sort dances one day with a lady at a ball, and loses his heart to her in a minuet; the next, another carries it off in the Mall; and the next day, perhaps, he goes out of town, and lodges

it in the possession of all the country beauties successively, till at last he brings it back to town with him, and presents it to the first woman he meets. This class is very numerous, but ought by no means to hold a place among the tribe of true lovers, since a gentleman, who is thus in love with every body, may fairly be said not to be in love at all.

Love is universally allowed to be whimsical; and if whim is the essence of love, none can be accounted truer lovers than those who admire their mistress for some particular charm, which enchains them, though it would singly never captivate any body else. Some gentlemen have been won to conjugal embraces by a pair of fine arms; others have been held fast by an even white set of teeth; and I know a very good scholar, who was ensnared by a set of golden tresses, because it was the taste of the ancients, and the true classical hair. Those ladies, whose lovers are such piecemeal admirers, are in perpetual danger of losing them. A rash or a pimple may abate their affection. All those, the object of whose adoration is merely a pretty face or a fine person, are in the power of the like accidents; and the smallpox has occasioned many a poor lady the loss of her beauty and her lover at the same time.

But after all these spurious enamoratos, there are some few, whose passion is sincere and well founded. True genuine love is always built upon esteem: not that I would mean, that a man can reason and argue himself into love; but that a constant intercourse with an amiable woman will lead him into a contemplation of her excellent qualities, which will insensibly win his heart before he is himself aware of it, and beget all those hopes, fears, and other extravagancies which are the natural attendants on a true passion. Love has been described ten thousand times; but that I may be sure that the little

picture I would draw of it is taken from nature, I will conclude this paper with the story of honest Will Easy and his amiable wife. Will Easy and Miss —— became very early acquainted; and, from being familiarly intimate with the whole family, Will might be almost said to live there. He dined and supped with them perpetually in town, and spent great part of the summer with them at their seat in the country. Will and the lady were both universally allowed to have sense; and their frequent conversations together gave them undoubted proofs of the goodness of each other's disposition. They delighted in the company, and admired the perfections of each other, and gave a thousand little indications of a growing passion, not unobserved by others, even while it was yet unknown and unsuspected by themselves. However, after some time, Will, by mutual agreement, demanded the lady of her father in marriage. But alas! "the course of true love never yet run smooth;" the ill-judged ambition of a parent induced the father, out of mere love to his daughter, to refuse her hand to the only man in the world with whom she could live happily, because he imagined that he might, in the Smithfield phrase, do better for her. But love, grounded on such principles, is not easily shaken; and, as it appeared that their mutual passion had taken too deep a root ever to be extirpated, the father at last, reluctantly, half consented to their union. They enjoy a genteel competency; and Will, by his integrity and abilities, is an honour to a learned profession, and a blessing to his wife; whose greatest praise is, that her virtues deserve such an husband. She is pleased with having "left dross to duchesses;" he considers her happiness as his main interest; and their example every day gives fresh conviction to the father, that where two persons of strong sense and good

hearts conceive a reciprocal affection for each other, their passion is genuine and lasting, and their union is perhaps the truest state of happiness under the sun.

Odi profanum vulgus et arceo.

HOR.

I hate the vulgar ; nor will condescend
To call a foul-mouth'd handicraftsman friend.

I KNOW not any greater misfortune that can happen to a young fellow, at his first setting out in life, than his falling into low company. He that sinks to a familiarity with persons much below his own level, will be constantly weighed down by his base connections: and though he may easily plunge still lower, he will find it almost impossible ever to rise again. He will also inevitably contract a mean air, and an illiberal disposition; and you can no more give him an ingenious turn of mind by a sudden introduction to genteel company, than you can make an apprentice a fine gentleman by dressing him in embroidery: though experience teaches us, that the mind is, unhappily, sooner distorted than reformed; and a gentleman will as readily catch the manners of the vulgar by mixing with such mean associates, as he would daub his clothes with soot by running against a chimney-sweeper.

A propensity to low company is owing either to an original meanness of spirit, a want of education, or an ill-placed pride, commonly arising from both the forementioned causes. Those who are naturally of a groveling disposition show it even at school, by choosing their playfellows from the scum of the class; and are never so happy as when they can

steal down to romp with the servants in the kitchen. They have no emulation in them; they entertain none of that decent pride, which is so essential a requisite in all characters; and the total absence of which, in a boy, is a certain indication that his riper age will be contemptible. I remember a young fellow of this cast, who, by his early attachment to low company, gave up all the advantages of a good family and ample fortune. He not only lost all his natural interest in the county where his estate was situated, but was not honoured with the acquaintance of one gentleman in it. He lived, indeed, chiefly in town, and at an expense sufficient to have maintained him among those of the first rank; but he was so perpetually surrounded with men of the lowest character, that people of fashion, or even those of a much inferior fortune, would have thought it infamous to be seen with him. All the while he was reckoned by his associates to be a mighty goodnatured gentleman, and without the least bit of pride in him.

It is one of the greatest advantages of education, that it encourages an ingenious spirit, and cultivates a liberal disposition. We do not wonder, that a lad who has never been sent to school, and whose faculties have been suffered to rust at the hall-house, should form too close an intimacy with his best friends, the groom and the gamekeeper; but it would amaze us to see a boy, well educated, cherish this ill-placed pride of being, as it is called, the head of the company. A person of this humble ambition will be very well content to pay the reckoning for the honour of being distinguished by the title of *The Gentleman*; while he is unwilling to associate with men of fashion, lest they should be his superiors in rank or fortune; or with men of parts, lest they should excel him in abilities. Some-

times, indeed, it happens, that a person of genius and learning will stoop to receive the incense of mean and illiterate flatterers in a porter-house or cyder-cellar; and I remember to have heard of a poet, who was once caught in a brothel, in the very fact of reading his verses to the good old mother and a circle of her daughters.

There are some few, who have been led into low company merely from an affectation of humour; and, from a desire of seeing the droller scenes of life, have descended to associate with the meanest of the mob, and picked their cronies from lanes and alleys. The most striking instance I know of this low passion for drollery is Toby Bumper, a young fellow of family and fortune, and not without talents, who has taken more than ordinary pains to degrade himself; and is now become almost as low a character as any of those whom he has chosen for his companions. Toby will drink purl in a morning, smoke his pipe in a night-cellar, dive for a dinner, or eat black-puddings at Bartholomew Fair, for the humour of the thing. He has also studied and practises all the plebeian arts and exercises under the best masters; and has disgraced himself with every impolite accomplishment. He has had many a set-to with Buckhorse, and has now and then had the honour of receiving a fall from the great Broughton himself. Nobody is better known among the hackney coachmen as a brother whip. At the noble game of prison-bars, he is a match even for the natives of Essex or Cheshire; and he is frequently engaged in the Artillery Ground with Faulkner and Didgate at cricket, and is himself esteemed as good at bat as either of the Bennets. Another of Toby's favourite amusements is, to attend the executions at Tyburn: and it once happened, that one of his

familiar intimates was unfortunately brought thither; when Toby carried his regard to his deceased friend so far, as to get himself knocked down in endeavouring to rescue the body from the surgeons.

As Toby affects to mimic, in every particular, the air and manners of the vulgar, he never fails to enrich his conversation with their emphatic oaths and expressive dialect, which recommend him as a man of excellent humour and high fun among the Choice Spirits at Comus's Court, or at the meetings of the "Sons of Sound Sense and Satisfaction." He is also particularly famous for singing those cant songs, drawn up in the barbarous dialect of sharpers and pickpockets; the humour of which he often heightens by screwing up his mouth and rolling about a large quid of tobacco between his jaws. These and other like accomplishments frequently promote him to the chair in these facetious societies.

Toby has indulged the same notions of humour even in his amours, and is well known to every street-walker between Charing Cross and Cheapside. This has given several shocks to his constitution, and often involved him in unlucky scrapes. He has been frequently bruised, beaten, and kicked by the bullies of Wapping and Fleet Ditch; and was once soundly drubbed by a soldier for engaging with his trull in St. James's Park. The last time I saw him he was laid up with two black eyes and a broken pate, which he got in a midnight skirmish, about a mistress, in a night-cellar.

Servata semper lege et ratione loquendi.

JUV.

Your talk to decency and reason suit,
Nor prate like fools or gabble like a brute.

IN the comedy of the Frenchman in London, which we are told was acted at Paris with universal applause for several nights together, there is a character of a rough Englishman, who is represented as quite unskilled in the graces of conversation; and his dialogue consists almost entirely of a repetition of the common salutation of "How do you do, How do you do?" Our nation has, indeed, been generally supposed to be of a sullen and uncommunicative disposition; while, on the other hand, the loquacious French have been allowed to possess the art of conversing beyond all other people. The Englishman requires to be wound up frequently, and stops very soon; but the Frenchman runs on in a continued alarm. Yet it must be acknowledged, that, as the English consist of very different humours, their manner of discourse admits of great variety: but the whole French nation converse alike; and there is no difference in their address between a marquis and a valet de chambre. We may frequently see a couple of French barbers accosting each other in the street, and paying their compliments with the same volubility of speech, the same grimace and action, as two courtiers on the Tuilleries.

I shall not attempt to lay down any particular rules for conversation, but rather point out such faults in discourse and behaviour, as render the company of half mankind rather tedious than amusing. It is in vain, indeed, to look for conver-

sation, where we might expect to find it in the greatest perfection, among persons of fashion: there it is almost annihilated by universal card-playing, insomuch that I have heard it given as a reason, why it is impossible for our present writers to succeed in the dialogue of genteel comedy, that our people of quality scarce ever meet but to game. All their discourse turns upon the odd trick and the four honours: and it is no less a maxim with the votaries of Whist than with those of Bacchus, that talking spoils company.

Every one endeavours to make himself as agreeable to society as he can: but it often happens, that those who most aim at shining in conversation, overshoot their mark. Though a man succeeds, he should not (as is frequently the case) engross the whole talk to himself, for that destroys the very essence of conversation, which is talking together. We should try to keep up conversation like a ball bandied to and fro from one to another, rather than seize it all to ourselves, and drive it before us like a foot-ball. We should likewise be cautious to adapt the matter of our discourse to our company, and not talk Greek before ladies, or of the last new furbelow to a meeting of country justices.

But nothing throws a more ridiculous air over our whole conversation than certain peculiarities easily acquired, but very difficultly conquered and discarded. In order to display these absurdities in a truer light, it is my present purpose to enumerate such of them as are most commonly to be met with; and first to take notice of those buffoons in society, the Attitudinarians and Face-makers. These accompany every word with a peculiar grimace or gesture; they assent with a shrug, and contradict with a twisting of the neck; are angry with a wry mouth, and pleased in a

caper or a minuet-step. They may be considered as Speaking Harlequins; and their rules of eloquence are taken from the posture-master. These should be condemned to converse only in dumb show with their own person in the looking glass; as well as the Smirkers and Smilers, who so prettily set off their faces, together with their words, by a *je-ne-scai-quoi* between a grin and a dimple. With these we may likewise rank the affected tribe of Mimics, who are constantly taking off the peculiar tone of voice or gesture of their acquaintance; though they are such wretched imitators, that, like bad painters, they are frequently forced to write the name under the picture before we can discover any likeness.

Next to these, whose elocution is absorbed in action, and who converse chiefly with their arms and legs, we may consider the Professed Speakers. And first, the Emphatical, who squeeze and press, and ram down every syllable with excessive vehemence and energy. These orators are remarkable for their distinct elocution and force of expression: they dwell on the important particles *of* and *the*, and the significant conjunctive *and*; which they seem to hawk up, with much difficulty, out of their own throats, and to cram them, with no less pain, into the ears of their auditors. These should be suffered only to syringe, as it were, the ears of a deaf man, through an hearing trumpet: though I must confess, that I am equally offended with the Whisperers, or low speakers, who seem to fancy all their acquaintance deaf, and come up so close to you, that they may be said to measure noses with you, and frequently overcome you with the exhalations of a powerful breath. I would have these oracular gentry obliged to talk at a distance through a speaking-trumpet, or apply their lips to the walls of a whispering gallery.

The Wits, who will not condescend to utter any thing but a bon-mot, and the Whistlers, or tune-hummers, who never articulate at all, may be joined very agreeably together in concert; and to these tinkling cymbals I would also add the sounding brass—the Bawler, who inquires after your health with the bellowing of a town-crier.

The Tatlers, whose pliable pipes are admirably adapted to the “soft parts of conversation,” and sweetly “prattling out of fashion,” make very pretty music from a beautiful face and a female tongue; but from a rough and manly voice and coarse features, mere nonsense is as harsh and dissonant as a jig from an hurdy-gurdy. The Swearers I have spoken of in a former paper; but the Half-Swearers, who split, and mince, and fritter their oaths into Gad’s Bud, Ad’s Fish, and Demmee—the Gothic Humbuggers—and those who “nick-name God’s creatures,” and call a man a cabbage, a crab, a queer cub, an odd fish, and an unaccountable muskin, should never come into company without an interpreter. But I will not tire my reader’s patience by pointing out all the pests of conversation, nor dwell particularly on the Sensibles, who pronounce dogmatically on the most trivial points, and speak in sentences—the Wonderers, who are always wondering what o’clock it is, or wondering whether it will rain or no, or wondering when the moon changes—the Phraseologists, who explain a thing by *all that*, or enter into particulars with *this and that and t’other*—and, lastly, the Silent Men, who seem afraid of opening their mouths lest they should catch cold, and literally observe the precept of the gospel by letting their conversation be only *yea, yea, and nay, nay*.

The rational intercourse kept up by conversation, is one of our principal distinctions from brutes.

We should therefore endeavour to turn this peculiar talent to our advantage, and consider the organs of speech as the instruments of understanding: we should be very careful not to use them as the weapons of vice, or tools of folly, and do our utmost to unlearn any trivial or ridiculous habits, which tend to lessen the value of such inestimable prerogative. It is, indeed, imagined by some philosophers, that even birds and beasts (though without the power of articulation) perfectly understand one another by the sounds they utter; and that dogs, cats, &c. have each a particular language to themselves, like different nations. Thus it may be supposed, that nightingales of Italy have as fine an ear for their own native wood-notes as any Signor or Signora for an Italian air; that the boars of Westphalia gruntle as expressively through the nose as the inhabitants in High German; and that the frogs in the dikes of Holland croak as intelligibly as the natives jabber their Low Dutch. However this may be, we may consider those, whose tongues hardly seem to be under the influence of reason, and do not keep up the proper conversation of human creatures, as imitating the language of different animals. Thus, for instance, the affinity between Chatterers and Monkies, and Praters and Parrots, is too obvious not to occur at once: Grunters and Growlers may be justly compared to Hogs: Snarlers are Curs; and the Spitfire Passionate are a sort of Wild Cats, that will not bear stroking, but will purr when they are pleased. Complainers are Screech Owls; and Story-tellers, always repeating the same dull note, are Cuckows. Poets, that prick up their ears at their own hideous braying, are no better than Asses: Critics in general are venomous Serpents, that delight in hissing; and some of them, who have got by heart a few technical terms without knowing their mean-

ing, are no other than Magpies. I myself, who have crowed to the whole town for near three years past, may perhaps put my readers in mind of a Dunghill Cock; but as I must acquaint them, that they will hear the last of me on this day fortnight, I hope they will then consider me as a Swan, who is supposed to sing sweetly at his dying moments.

Select Letters

FROM THE

CITIZEN OF THE WORLD.



Select Letters

FROM THE

CITIZEN OF THE WORLD.

LETTER from Lien Chi Altangi, to the care of Fipsihi, resident in Moscow; to be forwarded by the Russian Caravan to Fum Hoam, First President of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking in China.

THE English seem as silent as the Japanese, yet vainer than the inhabitants of Siam. Upon my arrival, I attributed that reserve to modesty, which I now find has its origin in pride. Condescend to address them first, and you are sure of their acquaintance; stoop to flattery, and you conciliate their friendship and esteem. They bear hunger, cold, fatigue, and all the miseries of life, without shrinking. Danger only calls forth their fortitude; they even exult in calamity: but contempt is what they cannot bear. An Englishman fears contempt more than death: he often flies to death as a refuge from its pressure; and dies, when he fancies the world has ceased to esteem him.

Pride seems the source, not only of their national vices, but of their national virtues also. An Englishman is taught to love his king as his friend, but to

acknowledge no other master than the laws which himself has contributed to enact. He despises those nations, who, that one may be free, all are content to be slaves; who first lift a tyrant into terror, and then shrink under his power, as if delegated from Heaven. Liberty is echoed in all their assemblies; and thousands might be found ready to offer up their lives for the sound, though, perhaps, not one of all the number understands its meaning. The lowest mechanic, however, looks upon it as his duty to be a watchful guardian of his country's freedom, and often uses a language that might seem haughty, even in the mouth of the great emperor who traces his ancestry to the moon.

A few days ago, passing by one of their prisons, I could not avoid stopping, in order to listen to a dialogue, which I thought might afford me some entertainment. The conversation was carried on between a debtor, through the grate of his prison, a porter, who had stopped to rest his burden, and a soldier at the window. The subject was upon a threatened invasion from France: and each seemed extremely anxious to rescue his country from the impending danger. "For my part," cries the prisoner, "the greatest of my apprehensions is for our freedom: if the French should conquer, what would become of English liberty? My dear friends, liberty is the Englishman's prerogative: we must preserve that at the expense of our lives; of that the French shall never deprive us. It is not to be expected, that men, who are slaves themselves, would preserve our freedom, should they happen to conquer." "Ay, slaves," cries the porter, "they are all slaves, fit only to carry burdens every one of them. Before I would stoop to slavery, may this be my poison (and he held the goblet in his hand), may this be my poison — but I would sooner list to be a soldier."

The soldier, taking the goblet from his friend,

with much awe, fervently cried out, "It is not so much our liberties as our religion that would suffer by such a change; ay, our religion my lads. May the devil sink me into flames (such was the solemnity of his adjuration), if the French should come over, but our religion would be utterly undone." So saying, instead of a libation, he applied the goblet to his lips, and confirmed his sentiments with a ceremony of the most persevering devotion.

In short, every man here pretends to be a politician: even the fair sex are sometimes found to mix the severity of national altercation with the blandishments of love, and often become conquerors by more weapons of destruction than their eyes.

This universal passion for politics is gratified by daily gazettes, as with us in China. But as, in ours, the emperor endeavours to instruct his people, in theirs, the people endeavour to instruct the administration.

You must not, however, imagine, that they who compile these papers have any actual knowledge of the politics or the government of the state: they only collect their materials from the oracle of some coffee-house; which oracle has himself gathered them, the night before, from a beau at a gaming-table, who has pillaged his knowledge from a great man's porter, who has had his information from the great man's gentleman, who had invented the whole story for his own amusement the night preceding.

The English, in general, seem fonder of gaining the esteem than the love of those they converse with. This gives a formality to their amusements; their gayest conversations have something too wise for innocent relaxation. Though in company you are seldom disgusted with the absurdity of a fool, yet you are seldom lifted into rapture by those strokes of vivacity, which give instant, though not permanent pleasure.

What they want, however, in gaiety, they make up in politeness. You smile at hearing me praise the English for their politeness; you who have heard very different accounts from the missionaries at Pekin, who have seen such a different behaviour in their merchants and seamen at home. But I must still repeat it, the English seem more polite than any of their neighbours: their great art in this respect lies in endeavouring, while they oblige, to lessen the force of the favour. Other countries are fond of obliging a stranger, but seem desirous that he should be sensible of the obligation. The English confer their kindness with an appearance of indifference, and give away benefits with an air as if they despised them.

Walking a few days ago between an English and a French man in the suburbs of the city, we were overtaken by a heavy shower of rain. I was unprepared, but they had each large coats, which defended them from what seemed to me a perfect inundation. The Englishman, seeing me shrink from the weather, accosted me thus: "Psha, man, what dost thou shrink at? Here, take this coat; I don't want it: I find it no way useful to me; I had as lief be without it." The Frenchman began to show his politeness in turn. "My dear friend," cried he, "why don't you oblige me by making use of my coat? You see how well it defends me from the rain. I should not choose to part with it to others: but to such a friend as you, I could even part with my skin to do him a service."

From such minute circumstances as these, most reverend Fum Hoam, I am sensible your sagacity will collect instruction. The volume of Nature is the Book of Knowledge; and he becomes most wise who makes the most judicious selection.

Farewell.

Letter from the same.

I HAVE been deceived ! She whom I fancied a daughter of Paradise, has proved to be one of the infamous disciples of Han ! I have lost a trifle ; I have gained the consolation of having discovered a deceiver. I once more therefore relax into my former indifference with regard to the English ladies ; they once more begin to appear disagreeable in my eyes. Thus is my whole time passed in forming conclusions, which the next minute's experience may probably destroy : the present moment becomes a comment on the past, and I improve rather on humility than wisdom.

Their laws and religion forbid the English to keep more than one woman : I therefore concluded that prostitutes were banished from society. I was deceived ; every man here keeps as many wives as he can maintain ; the laws are cemen'd with blood, praised and disregarded. The very Chinese, whose religion allows him two wives, take not half the liberties of the English in this particular. Their laws may be compared to the books of the Sybils ; they are held in great veneration, but seldom read, or seldomer understood ; even those who pretend to be their guardians dispute about the meaning of many of them, and confess their ignorance of others. The law, therefore, which commands them to have but one wife, is strictly observed only by those for whom one is more than sufficient, or by such as have not money to buy two. As for the rest, they violate it publicly, and some glory in its violation. They seem to think, like the Persians, that they give evident marks of manhood, by increasing their seraglio. A mandarine, therefore, here generally keeps four wives, a gentleman three, and a stage player two. As for the magistrates, the country

justices, and squires, they are employed first in debauching young virgins, and then punishing the transgression.

From such a picture you will be apt to conclude, that he who employs four ladies for his amusement has four times as much constitution to spare as he who is contented with one; that a mandarine is much cleverer than a gentleman, and a gentleman than a player: and yet it is quite the reverse. A mandarine is frequently supported on spindle-shanks, appears emaciated by luxury, and is obliged to have recourse to variety merely from the weakness, not the vigour of his constitution, the number of his wives being the most equivocal symptom of his virility.

Besides the country squire, there is also another set of men, whose whole employment consists in corrupting beauty: these the silly part of the fair sex call amiable; the more sensible part of them, however, give them the title of abominable. You will probably demand, What are the talents of a man thus caressed by the majority of the opposite sex? what talents or what beauty is he possessed of, superior to the rest of his fellows? To answer you directly, he has neither talents nor beauty; but then he is possessed of impudence and assiduity. With assiduity and impudence, men of all ages, and of all figures, may commence admirers. I have even been told of some who made professions of expiring for love, when all the world could perceive they were going to die of old age; and, what is more surprising still, such battered beaux are generally most infamously successful.

A fellow of this kind employs three hours every morning in dressing his head, by which is understood only his hair.

He is a professed admirer, not of any particular lady, but of the whole sex.

He is to suppose every lady has caught cold every night, which gives him an opportunity of calling to see how she does the next morning.

He is, upon all occasions, to show himself in very great pain for the ladies ; if a lady drops even a pin, he is to fly in order to present it.

He never speaks to a lady without advancing his mouth to her ear, by which means he frequently addresses more senses than one.

Upon proper occasions he looks excessively tender. This is performed by laying his hand upon his heart, shutting his eyes, and showing his teeth.

He is excessively fond of dancing a minuet with the ladies, by which is only meant walking round the floor eight or ten times with his hat on, affecting great gravity, and sometimes looking tenderly on his partner.

He never affronts any man himself, and never resents an affront from another.

He has an infinite variety of small talk upon all occasions, and laughs when he has nothing more to say.

Such is the killing creature who prostrates himself to the sex till he has undone them ; all whose submissions are the effects of design ; and who, to please the ladies, almost becomes himself a lady.

Letter from the same.

THE republic of letters is a very common expression among the Europeans ; and yet, when applied to the learned of Europe, is the most absurd that can be imagined, since nothing is more unlike a republic than the society that goes by that name. From this expression, one would be apt to imagine that the learned were united into a single body,

joining their interests and concurring in the same design. From this, one might be apt to compare them to our literary societies in China, where each acknowledges a just subordination, and all contribute to build the temple of science, without attempting, from ignorance or envy, to obstruct each other.

But very different is the state of learning here. Every member of this fancied republic is desirous of governing, and none willing to obey: each looks upon his fellow as his rival, not an assistant in the same pursuit. They calumniate, they injure, they despise, they ridicule each other. If one man writes a book that pleases, others shall write books, to show that he might have given still greater pleasure, or should not have pleased. If one happen to hit upon something new, there are numbers ready to assure the public, that all this was no novelty to them or the learned; that Cardanus, or Brunus, or some other author, too dull to be generally read, had anticipated the discovery. Thus, instead of uniting, like the members of a commonwealth, they are divided into almost as many factions as there are men; and their jarring constitution, instead of being styled a republic of letters, should be entitled an anarchy of literature.

It is true, there are some of superior abilities, who reverence and esteem each other; but their mutual admiration is not sufficient to shield off the contempt of the crowd. The wise are but few, and they praise with a feeble voice; the vulgar are many, and roar in reproaches. The truly great seldom unite in societies; have few meetings, no cabals: the dunces hunt in full cry, till they have run down a reputation, and then snarl and fight with each other about dividing the spoil. Here you may see the compilers and book-answerers of every month, when they have cut up some

respectable name, most frequently reproaching each other with stupidity and dulness; resembling the wolves of the Russian forest, who prey on venison or horse flesh when they can get it, but in cases of necessity lying in wait to devour each other. While they have new books to cut up, they make a hearty meal; but if this resource should unhappily fail, then it is that critics eat up critics, and compilers rob from compilations.

Confucius observes, that it is the duty of the learned to unite society more closely, and to persuade men to become citizens of the world; but the authors I refer to are not only for disuniting society, but kingdoms also. If the English are at war with France, the dunces of France think it their duty to be at war with those of England. Thus Freron, one of their first-rate scribblers, thinks proper to characterise all the English writers in the gross. "Their whole merit," says he, "consists in exaggeration, and often in extravagance: correct their pieces as you please, there still remains a leaven which corrupts the whole. They sometimes discover genius, but not the smallest share of taste; England is not a soil for the plants of genius to thrive in." This is open enough, with not the least adulation in the picture. But hear what a Frenchman of acknowledged abilities says upon the same subject. "I am at a loss to determine in what we excel the English, or wherein they excel us: when I compare the merits of both in any one species of literary composition, so many reputable and pleasing writers present themselves from either country, that my judgment rests in suspense: I am pleased with the disquisition, without finding the object of my inquiry." But, lest you should think the French are faulty alone in this respect, hear how an English journalist delivers his sentiments of them: "We are

amazed," says he, "to find so many works translated from the French, while we have such numbers neglected of our own. In our opinion, notwithstanding their fame throughout the rest of Europe, the French are the most contemptible reasoners (we had almost said writers) that can be imagined. However, nevertheless, excepting," &c. Another English writer, Shaftesbury, if I remember, on the contrary, says, that the French authors are pleasing and judicious, more clear, more methodical and entertaining, than those of his own country.

From these opposite pictures, you perceive that the good authors of either country praise, and the bad revile each other; and yet, perhaps, you'll be surprised, that indifferent writers should be the most apt to censure, as they have the most to apprehend from recrimination: you may perhaps imagine, that such as are possessed of fame themselves, should be most ready to declare their opinions, since what they say might pass for decision. But the truth happens to be, that the great are solicitous only of raising their own reputations, while the opposite class, alas! are solicitous of bringing every reputation down to a level with their own.

But let us acquit them of malice and envy; a critic is often guided by the same motives that direct his author. The author endeavours to persuade us that he has written a good book: the critic is equally solicitous to show that he could write a better, had he thought proper. A critic is a being possessed of all the vanity, but not the genius, of a scholar: incapable, from his native weakness, of lifting himself from the ground, he applies to contiguous merit for support, makes the sportive sallies of another's imagination his serious employment, pretends to take our feel-

ings under his care, teaches where to condemn, where to lay the emphasis of praise, and may with as much justice be called a man of taste, as the Chinese who measures his wisdom by the length of his nails.

If, then, a book, spirited or humorous, happen to appear in the republic of letters, several critics are in waiting, to bid the public not to laugh at a single line of it, for themselves had read it, and they know what is most proper to excite laughter. Other critics contradict the fulminations of this tribunal; call them all spiders, and assure the public that they ought to laugh without restraint. Another set are, in the mean time, quietly employed in writing notes to the book, intended to show the particular passages to be laughed at; when these are out, others still there are who write notes upon notes. Thus, a single new book employs, not only the paper makers, the printers, the pressmen, the bookbinders, the hawkers, but twenty critics, and as many compilers. In short, the body of the learned may be compared to a Persian army, where there are many pioneers, several sutlers, numberless servants, women and children, in abundance, and but few soldiers.

Adieu.

Letter from the same.

THOUGH fond of many acquaintances, I desire an intimacy only with a few. The man in black, whom I have often mentioned, is one whose friendship I could wish to acquire, because he possesses my esteem. His manners, it is true, are tinged with some strange inconsistencies, and he may be justly termed an humourist in a nation of humourists. Though he is generous even to profusion, he affects to be thought a prodigy of parsimony and prudence; though his conversation be replete with

the most sordid and selfish maxims, his heart is dilated with the most unbounded love. I have known him profess himself a man-hater, while his cheek was glowing with compassion; and, while his looks were softened into pity, I have heard him use the language of the most unbounded ill-nature. Some affect humanity and tenderness; others boast of having such dispositions from nature; but he is the only man I ever knew who seemed ashamed of his natural benevolence. He takes as much pains to hide his feelings, as any hypocrite would to conceal his indifference; but on every unguarded moment the mask drops off, and reveals him to the most superficial observer.

In one of our late excursions into the country, happening to discourse upon the provision that was made for the poor in England, he seemed amazed how any of his countrymen could be so foolishly weak as to relieve occasional objects of charity, when the laws had made such ample provision for their support. "In every parish house," says he, "the poor are supplied with food, clothes, fire, and a bed to lie on; they want no more, I desire no more myself: yet still they seem discontented. I am surprised at the inactivity of our magistrates in not taking up such vagrants, who are only a weight upon the industrious: I am surprised that the people are found to relieve them, when they must be at the same time sensible, that it in some measure encourages idleness, extravagance, and imposture. Were I to advise any man for whom I had the least regard, I would caution him by all means not to be imposed upon by their false pretences: let me assure you, Sir, they are impostors every one of them, and rather merit a prison than relief."

He was proceeding in this strain earnestly to dissuade me from an imprudence of which I am seldom guilty, when an old man, who still had

about him the remnants of tattered finery, implored our compassion. He assured us that he was no common beggar, but forced into the shameful profession to support a dying wife and five hungry children. Being prepossessed against such falsehoods, his story had not the least influence upon me: but it was quite otherwise with the man in black; I could see it visibly operate upon his countenance, and effectually interrupt his harangue. I could easily perceive that his heart burned to relieve the five starving children, but he seemed ashamed to discover his weakness to me. While he thus hesitated between compassion and pride, I pretended to look another way, and he seized this opportunity of giving the poor petitioner a piece of silver, bidding him, at the same time, in order that I should hear, go work for his bread, and not teaze passengers with such impertinent falsehoods for the future.

As he had fancied himself quite unperceived, he continued, as we proceeded, to rail against beggars with as much animosity as before: he threw in some episodes on his own amazing prudence and economy, with his profound skill in discovering impostors: he explained the manner in which he would deal with beggars were he a magistrate; hinted at enlarging some of the prisons for their reception, and told two stories of ladies that were robbed by beggar men. He was beginning a third to the same purpose, when a sailor with a wooden leg once more crossed our walks, desiring our pity, and blessing our limbs. I was for going on without taking any notice; but my friend, looking wishfully upon the poor petitioner, bid me stop, and he would show me with how much ease he could at any time detect an impostor.

He now, therefore, assumed a look of impor-

tance, and, in an angry tone, began to examine the sailor, demanding in what engagement he was thus disabled and rendered unfit for service. The sailor replied, in a tone as angrily as he, that he had been an officer on board a private ship of war, and that he had lost his leg abroad, in defence of those who did nothing at home. At this reply, all my friend's importance vanished in a moment; he had not a single question more to ask; he now only studied what method he should take to relieve him unobserved. He had, however, no easy part to act, as he was obliged to preserve the appearance of ill-nature before me, and yet relieve himself by relieving the sailor. Casting, therefore, a furious look upon some bundles of chips, which the fellow carried on a string at his back, my friend demanded how he sold his matches; but not waiting for a reply, desired, in a surly tone, to have a shilling's worth. The sailor seemed at first surprised at his demand; but soon recollecting himself, and presenting his whole bundle, "Here, master," says he, "take all my cargo, and a blessing into the bargain."

It is impossible to describe with what an air of triumph my friend marched off with his new purchase; he assured me, that he was firmly of opinion that those fellows must have stolen their goods, who could thus afford to sell them for half value; he informed me of several different uses to which those chips might be applied; he expatiated largely upon the savings that would result from lighting candles with a match, instead of thrusting them into the fire; he averred, that he would as soon have parted with a tooth as his money to those vagabonds, unless for some valuable consideration. I cannot tell how long this panegyric upon frugality and matches might have continued, had not his attention been called

off by another object, more distressful than either of the former. A woman in rags, with one child in her arms, and another on her back, was attempting to sing ballads, but with such a mournful voice, that it was difficult to determine whether she was singing or crying. A wretch who, in the deepest distress, still aimed at good-humour, was an object my friend was by no means capable of withstanding; his vivacity and his discourse were instantly interrupted; upon this occasion his very dissimulation had forsaken him. Even in my presence, he immediately applied his hands to his pockets in order to relieve her; but guess his confusion, when he found he had already given away all the money he carried about him to former objects. The misery painted in the woman's visage was not half so strongly expressed as the agony in his. He continued to search for some time, but to no purpose; till at length recollecting himself, with a face of ineffable good-nature, as he had no money, he put into her hands his shilling's worth of matches.

Letter from the same.

AS there appeared something reluctantly good in the character of my companion, I must own it surprised me, what could be his motives for thus concealing virtues, which others take such pains to display. I was unable to repress my desire of knowing the history of a man who thus seemed to act under continual restraint, and whose benevolence was rather the effect of appetite than reason.

It was not, however, till after repeated solicitations, he thought proper to gratify my curiosity.

"If you are fond," says he, "of hearing hair-breadth escapes, my history must certainly please;

for I have been for twenty years upon the very verge of starving, without ever being starved.

“ My father, the younger son of a good family, was possessed of a small living in the church. His education was above his fortune, and his generosity greater than his education. Poor as he was, he had his flatterers still poorer than himself; for every dinner he gave them they returned him an equivalent in praise; and this was all he wanted. The same ambition, that actuates a monarch at the head of an army, influenced my father at the head of his table; he told the story of the Ivy Tree, and that was laughed at; he repeated the jest of the two scholars and one pair of breeches, and the company laughed at that; but the story of Taffy in the sedan chair was sure to set the table in a roar: thus his pleasure increased in proportion to the pleasure he gave; he loved all the world, and he fancied all the world loved him.

“ As his fortune was but small, he lived up to the very extent of it: he had no intentions of leaving his children money, for that was dross; he was resolved they should have learning; for learning, he used to observe, was better than silver or gold. For this purpose he undertook to instruct us himself, and took as much pains to form our morals as to improve our understanding. We were told, that universal benevolence was what first cemented society; we were taught to consider all the wants of mankind as our own, to regard the human face divine with affection and esteem; he wound us up to be mere machines of pity, and rendered us incapable of withstanding the slightest impulse, made either by real or fictitious distress; in a word, we were perfectly instructed in the art of giving away thousands, before we were taught the more necessary qualifications of getting a farthing.

“ I cannot avoid imagining, that, thus refined by

his lessons out of all my suspicion, and divested of even all the little cunning which nature had given me, I resembled, upon my first entrance into the busy and insidious world, one of those gladiators who were exposed without armour in the amphitheatre at Rome. My father, however, who had only seen the world on one side, seemed to triumph in my superior discernment; though my whole stock of wisdom consisted in being able to talk like himself upon subjects that once were useful, because they were then topics of the busy world; but that now were utterly useless, because connected with the busy world no longer.

“ The first opportunity he had of finding his expectations disappointed was at the very middling figure I made in the university. He had flattered himself that he should soon see me rising into the foremost rank in literary reputation, but was mortified to find me utterly unnoticed and unknown. His disappointment might have been partly ascribed to his having overrated my talents, and partly to my dislike of mathematical reasonings, at a time when my imagination and memory, yet unsatisfied, were more eager after new objects, than desirous of reasoning upon those I knew. This did not, however, please my tutors, who observed, indeed, that I was a little dull, but at the same time allowed, that I seemed to be very good-natured, and had no harm in me.

“ After I had resided at college seven years, my father died and left me—his blessing. Thus shoved from shore, without ill-nature to protect, or cunning to guide, or proper stores to subsist me in so dangerous a voyage, I was obliged to embark in the wide world at twenty-two. But in order to settle in life, my friends advised (for they always advise when they begin to despise us), they advised me, I say, to go into orders.

“ To be obliged to wear a long wig, when I liked a short one, or a black coat, when I generally dressed in brown, I thought was such a restraint upon my liberty, that I absolutely rejected the proposal. A priest in England is not the same mortified creature as a bonze in China; with us, not he that fasts best, but eats best, is reckoned the best liver: yet I rejected a life of luxury, indolence, and ease, from no other consideration but that boyish one of dress. So that my friends were now perfectly satisfied I was undone, and yet they thought it a pity for one who had not the least harm in him, and was so very good-natured.

“ Poverty naturally begets dependence, and I was admitted as flatterer to a great man. At first I was surprised, that the situation of a flatterer at a great man's table could be thought disagreeable; there was no great trouble in listening attentively when his lordship spoke, and laughing when he looked round for applause. This even good manners might have obliged me to perform. I found, however, too soon, that his lordship was a greater dunce than myself, and, from that very moment, my power of flattery was at an end. I now rather aimed at setting him right, than at receiving his absurdities with submission: to flatter those we do not know is an easy task; but to flatter our intimate acquaintances, all whose foibles are strongly in our eye, is drudgery insupportable. Every time I now opened my lips in praise, my falsehood went to my conscience: his lordship soon perceived me to be unfit for service; I was therefore discharged; my patron at the same time graciously pleased to observe, that he believed I was tolerably good-natured, and had not the least harm in me.

“ Disappointed in ambition, I had recourse to

love. A young lady, who lived with her aunt, and was possessed of a pretty fortune in her own disposal, had given me, as I fancied, some reasons to expect success. The symptoms by which I was guided were striking; she had always laughed with me at her awkward acquaintances, and at her aunt among the number; she always observed, that a man of sense would make a better husband than a fool, and I as constantly applied the observation in my own favour; she continually talked, in my company, of friendship and the beauties of the mind, and spoke of Mr. Shrimp my rival's high-heeled shoes with detestation. These were circumstances which I thought strongly in my favour; so, after resolving and re-resolving, I had courage enough to tell her my mind. Miss heard my proposal with serenity, seeming at the same time to study the figures of her fan. Out at last it came. There was but one small objection to complete our happiness; which was no more than—that she was married three months before to Mr. Shrimp with high-heeled shoes! By way of consolation, however, she observed, that though I was disappointed in her, my addresses to her aunt would probably kindle her into sensibility, as the old lady always allowed me to be very good-natured, and not to have the least share of harm in me.

“ Yet still I had friends, numerous friends, and to them I was resolved to apply. O friendship! thou fond soother of the human breast, to thee we fly in every calamity; to thee the wretched seek for succour; on thee the care-tired son of misery fondly relies; from thy kind assistance the unfortunate always hope relief, and may be ever sure of disappointment! My first application was to a city scrivener, who had frequently offered to lend me money when he knew I did not want it. I informed him that now was the time to put his friend-

ship to the test ; that I wanted to borrow a couple of hundreds for a certain occasion, and was resolved to take it up from him. ‘ And pray, Sir,’ cried my friend, ‘ do you want all this money ? ’ ‘ Indeed I never wanted it more,’ returned I. ‘ I am sorry for that,’ cries the scrivener, ‘ with all my heart, for they, who want money when they come to borrow, will always want money when they should come to pay.’

“ From him I flew with indignation, to one of the best friends I had in the world, and made the same request. ‘ Indeed, Mr. Drybone,’ cries my friend, ‘ I always thought it would come to this. You know, Sir, I would not advise you but for your own good ; but your conduct has hitherto been ridiculous in the highest degree, and some of your acquaintance always thought you a very silly fellow. Let me see, you want two hundred pounds ; do you want only two hundred, Sir, exactly ? ’ ‘ To confess a truth,’ returned I, ‘ I shall want three hundred ; but then I have another friend from whom I can borrow the rest.’ ‘ Why then,’ replied my friend, ‘ if you would take my advice, and you know I would not presume to advise you but for your own good, I would recommend it to you to borrow the whole sum from that other friend, and then one note will serve for all, you know.’

“ Poverty now began to come fast upon me ; yet instead of growing more provident or cautious as I grew poor, I became every day more indolent and simple. A friend was arrested for fifty pounds : I was unable to extricate him, except by becoming his bail. When at liberty, he fled from his creditors, and left me to take his place. In prison I expected greater satisfactions than I had enjoyed at large. I hoped to converse with men in this new world, simple and believing like myself ; but I found them as cunning and as cautious as those in

the world I had left behind. They sponged up my money while it lasted, borrowed my coals, and never paid them, and cheated me when I played at cribbage. All this was done, because they believed me to be very good-natured, and knew that I had no harm in me.

“ Upon my first entrance into this mansion, which is to some the abode of despair, I felt no sensations different from those I experienced abroad. I was now on one side the door, and those who were unconfined were on the other ; this was all the difference between us. At first, indeed, I felt some uneasiness in considering how I should be able to provide this week for the wants of the week ensuing ; but, after some time, if I found myself sure of eating one day, I never troubled my head how I was to be supplied another. I seized every precarious meal with the utmost good humour, indulged no rants of spleen at my situation, never called down heaven and all the stars to behold me dining upon an half pennyworth of radishes ; my very companions were taught to believe that I liked sallad better than mutton. I contented myself with thinking, that all my life I should either eat white bread or brown, considered that all that happened was best, laughed when I was not in pain, took the world as it went, and read Tacitus often, for want of more books and company.

“ How long I might have continued in this torpid state of simplicity I cannot tell, had I not been roused by seeing an old acquaintance, whom I knew to be a prudent blockhead, preferred to a place in the government. I now found that I had pursued a wrong tract, and that the true way of being able to relieve others, was first to aim at independence myself. My immediate care was to leave my present habitation, and make an entire reformation in my conduct and behaviour, For a free, open, undesigning

deportment, I put on that of closeness, prudence, and economy. One of the most heroic actions I ever performed, and for which I shall praise myself as long as I live, was the refusing half-a-crown to an old acquaintance at the time when he wanted it, and I had it to spare ; for this alone, I deserved to be decreed an ovation.

“ I now, therefore, pursued a course of uninterrupted frugality, seldom wanted a dinner, and was consequently invited to twenty. I soon began get the character of a saving hunk that had money, and insensibly grew into esteem. Neighbours have asked my advice in the disposal of their daughters, and I have always taken care not to give any. I have contracted friendship with an alderman, only by observing, that if we take a farthing from a thousand pound, it will be a thousand pound no longer. I have been invited to a pawnbroker’s table, by pretending to hate gravy ; and am now actually upon treaty of marriage with a rich widow, for only having observed that the bread was rising. If ever I am asked a question, whether I know it or not, instead of answering it, I only smile and look wise. If a charity is proposed, I go about with the hat, but put nothing in myself. If a wretch solicits my pity, I observe that the world is filled with impostors, and take a certain method of not being deceived, by never relieving. In short, I now find the truest way of finding esteem, even from the indigent, is, to give away nothing, and thus have much in our power to give.”

Letter from the same.

WERE we to estimate the learning of the English by the number of books that are every day pub-

lished among them, perhaps no country, not even China itself, could equal them in this particular. I have reckoned not less than twenty-three new books published in one day; which, upon computation, makes eight thousand three hundred and ninety-five in one year. Most of these are not confined to one single science, but embrace the whole circle. History, politics, poetry, mathematics, metaphysics, and the philosophy of nature, are all comprised in a manual, not larger than that in which our children are taught the letters. If, then, we suppose the learned of England to read but an eighth part of the works which daily come from the press (and surely none can pretend to learning upon less easy terms), at this rate, every scholar will read a thousand books in one year. From such a calculation, you may conjecture what an amazing fund of literature a man must be possessed of, who thus reads three new books every day, not one of which but contains all the good things that ever were said or written.

And yet, I know not how it happens, but the English are not, in reality, so learned as would seem from this calculation. We meet but few who know all arts and sciences to perfection; whether it is, that the generality are incapable of such extensive knowledge, or that the authors of these books are not adequate instructors. In China, the emperor himself takes cognizance of all the doctors in the kingdom who profess authorship. In England, every man may be an author that can write; for they have, by law, liberty not only of saying what they please, but of being also as dull as they please.

Yesterday I testified my surprise to the man in black, where writers could be found, in sufficient number, to throw off the books I daily saw crowding from the press. I at first imagined, that their learned seminaries might take this method of instructing the world; but to obviate this objection, my

companion assured me, that the doctors of colleges never wrote, and that some of them had actually forgot their reading. "But if you desire," continued he, "to see a collection of authors, I fancy I can introduce you this evening to a club, which assembles every Saturday at seven, at the sign of the Broom, near Islington, to talk over the business of the last, and the entertainment of the week ensuing." I accepted his invitation: we walked together, and entered the house some time before the usual hour for the company assembling.

My friend took this opportunity of letting me into the characters of the principal members of the club, not even the host excepted, who, it seems, was once an author himself, but preferred by a bookseller to this situation, as a reward for his services.

"The first person," said he, "of our society, is Dr. Nonentity, a metaphysician. Most people think him a profound scholar; but, as he seldom speaks, I cannot be positive in that particular. He generally spreads himself before the fire, sucks his pipe, talks little, drinks much, and is reckoned very good company. I am told he writes indexes to perfection; he makes essays on the origin of evil, philosophical inquiries upon any subject, and draws up an answer to any book upon twenty-four hours' warning. You may distinguish him from the rest of the company by his long grey wig, and the blue handkerchief round his neck.

"The next to him, in merit and esteem, is Tim Syllabub, a droll creature: he sometimes shines as a star of the first magnitude among the choice spirits of the age. He is reckoned equally excellent at a rebus, a riddle, a bawdy song, and an hymn for the Tabernacle. You will know him by his shabby finery, his powdered wig, dirty shirt, and broken silk stockings.

"After him succeeds Mr. Tibbs, a very useful

hand. He writes receipts for the bite of a mad dog, and throws off an Eastern tale to perfection. He understands the business of an author as well as any man, for no bookseller alive can cheat him. You may distinguish him by the peculiar clumsiness of his figure and the coarseness of his coat. However, though it be coarse, as he sometimes tells the company, he has paid for it.

“ Lawyer Squint is the politician of the society ; he makes speeches for parliament, writes addresses to his fellow-subjects and letters to noble commanders : he gives the history of every new play, and finds seasonable thoughts upon every occasion.” My companion was proceeding in his description, when the host came running in, with terror on his countenance, to tell us, that the door was beset with bailiffs. “ If that be the case, then,” says my companion, “ we had as good be going, — for I am sure we shall not see one of the company this night.” Wherefore, disappointed, we were both obliged to return home, he to enjoy the oddities which compose his character alone, and I to write, as usual, to my friend the occurrences of the day. Adieu.

Letter from the same.

BY my last advices from Moscow, I find the caravan has not yet departed for China. I still continue to write, expecting that you may receive a large number of my letters at once. In them you may find rather a minute detail of English peculiarities than a general picture of their manners or disposition. Happy it were for mankind if all travellers would thus, instead of characterizing a people in general terms, lead us into a detail of those minute circumstances, which first influenced their opinion. The genius of a country should be investigated with a

kind of experimental inquiry: by this means we should have more precise and just notions of foreign nations, and detect travellers themselves when they happen to form wrong conclusions.

My friend and I repeated our visit to the club of authors, where, upon our entrance, we found the members all assembled, and engaged in a loud debate.

The poet, in shabby finery, holding a manuscript in his hand, was earnestly endeavouring to persuade the company to hear him read the first book of an heroic poem, which he had composed the day before. But against this all the members very warmly objected. They knew no reason why any member of the club should be indulged with a particular hearing, when many of them had published whole volumes, which had never been looked into. They insisted, that the law should be observed, where reading in company was expressly noticed. It was in vain that the plaintiff pleaded the peculiar merits of his piece. He spoke to an assembly insensible to all his remonstrances. The book of laws was opened and read by the secretary, where it was expressly enacted, "That whatsoever poet, speech-maker, critic, or historian, should presume to engage the company by reading his own works, he was to lay down sixpence previous to opening the manuscript, and should be charged one shilling an hour while he continued reading; the said shilling to be equally distributed among the company, as a recompense for their trouble."

Our poet seemed at first to shrink at the penalty, hesitating for some time whether he should deposite the fine or shut up the poem; but looking round, and perceiving two strangers in the room, his love of fame outweighed his prudence, and laying down the sum by law established, he insisted on his prerogative.

A profound silence ensuing, he began by explaining his design: "Gentlemen," says he, "the present piece is not one of your common epic poems, which come from the press like paper kites in summer: there are none of your Turnuses or Didoes in it; it is an heroical description of nature. I only beg you'll endeavour to make your souls in unison with mine, and hear with the same enthusiasm with which I have written. The poem begins with the description of an author's bedchamber; the picture was sketched in my own apartment; for you must know, gentlemen, that I am myself the hero." Then putting himself into the attitude of an orator, with all the emphasis of voice and action, he proceeded:—

"Where the Red Lion flaring o'er the way,
Invites each passing stranger that can pay:
Where Calvert's butt, and Parson's black Champaign,
Regale the drabs and bloods of Drury Lane;
There, in a lonely room, from bailiffs snug,
The Muse found Scroggen stretch'd beneath a rug.
A window, patch'd with paper, lent a ray,
That dimly show'd the state in which he lay.
The sanded floor, that grits beneath the tread;
The humid wall, with paltry pictures spread;
The royal game of goose was there in view,
And the twelve rules the royal martyr drew;
The seasons, fram'd with listing, found a place,
And brave Prince William show'd his lamp-black face.
The morn was cold; he views, with keen desire,
The rusty grate unconscious of a fire.
With beer and milk arrears the frieze was scor'd,
And five crack'd teacups dress'd the chimney board.
A nightcap deck'd his brows instead of bay—
A cap by night—a stocking all the day!"

With this last line he seemed so much elated, that he was unable to proceed. "There, gentlemen," cries he, "there is description for you: Rabelais's bedchamber is but a fool to it:

A cap by night—a stocking all the day!

There is sound, and sense, and truth, and nature, in the trifling compass of ten little syllables."

He was too much employed in self-admiration to observe the company, who, by nods, winks, shrugs, and stifled laughter, testified every mark of contempt. He turned severally to each for their opinion, and found all, however, ready to applaud. One swore it was inimitable; and another said it was damu'd fine; and another cried out, in rapture, *Carissimo*. At last, addressing himself to the president, "And pray, Mr. Squint," says he, "let us have your opinion." "Mine!" answered the president, taking the manuscript out of the author's hands, "may this glass suffocate me, but I think it equal to any thing I have seen; and I fancy," continued he, doubling up the poem, and forcing it into the author's pocket, "that you will get great honour when it comes out, so I shall beg leave to put it in. We will not intrude upon your good-nature, in desiring to hear more of it at present; *ex ungue Herculem*, we are satisfied, perfectly satisfied." The author made two or three attempts to pull it out a second time, and the president made as many to prevent him. Thus, though with reluctance, he was at last obliged to sit down, contented with the commendations for which he had paid.

When this tempest of poetry and praise was blown over, one of the company changed the subject, by wondering how any man could be so dull as to write poetry at present, since prose itself would hardly pay. "Would you think it, gentlemen," continued he, "I have actually written, last week, sixteen prayers, twelve bawdy jests, and three sermons, all at the rate of sixpence apiece! And, what is still more extraordinary, the bookseller has lost by the bargain. Such sermons would once have gained me a prebend's stall; but now, alas! we have neither piety, taste, nor humour among us. Positively, if his season does not turn out better than it has be-

gun, unless the ministry commit some blunders to furnish us with a new topic of abuse, I shall resume my old business of working at the press instead of finding it employment."

The whole club seemed to join in condemning the season, as one of the worst that had come for some time: a gentleman particularly observed, that the nobility were never known to subscribe worse than at present. "I know not how it happens," said he, "though I followed them up as close as possible, yet I could hardly get a single subscription in a week. The houses of the great are as inaccessible as a frontier garrison at midnight. I never see a nobleman's door half opened, that some surly porter or footman does not stand full in the breach. I was yesterday to wait with a subscription proposal upon my Lord Squash the Creolian. I had posted myself at his door the whole morning, and, just as he was getting into his coach, thrust my proposal snug into his hand, folded up in the form of a letter from myself. He just glanced at the superscription, and, not knowing the hand, consigned it to his valet de chambre: this respectable personage treated it as his master, and put it into the hands of the porter: the porter grasped my proposal frowning, and, measuring my figure from top to toe, put it back into my own hands unopened."

"To the devil I pitch all the nobility," cries a little man, in a peculiar accent, "I am sure they have of late used me most scurvily. You must know, gentlemen, some time ago, upon the arrival of a certain noble duke from his travels, I set myself down, and vamped up a fine flaunting, poetical panygyric, which I had written in such a strain, that I fancied it would have even wheedled milk from a mouse. In this I represented the whole kingdom welcoming his Grace to his native soil, not forgetting the loss France and Italy would sustain in their arts

by his departure. I expected to touch for a bank-bill at least ; so, folding up my verses in gilt paper, I gave my last half-crown to a genteel servant to be the bearer. My letter was safely conveyed to his Grace ; and the servant, after four hours' absence, during which time I led the life of a fiend, returned with a letter four times as big as mine. Guess my extasy at the prospect of so fine a return. I eagerly took the packet into my hands, that trembled to receive it. I kept it some time unopened before me, brooding over the expected treasure it contained ; when, opening it, as I hope to be saved, gentlemen, his Grace had sent me, in payment for my poem, no bank-bills, but six copies of verse, each longer than mine, addressed to him upon the same occasion."

"A nobleman," cries a member, who had hitherto been silent, "is created as much for the confusion of us authors as the catchpole. I'll tell you a story, gentlemen, which is as true as that this pipe is made of clay. When I was delivered of my first book, I owed my tailor for a suit of clothes ; but that was nothing new, you know, and may be any man's case as well as mine. Well, owing him for a suit of clothes, and hearing that my book took very well, he sent for his money, and insisted upon being paid immediately : though I was at that time rich in fame, for my book run like wildfire, yet I was very short in money, and being unable to satisfy his demand, prudently resolved to keep my chamber, preferring a prison of my own choosing at home to one of my tailor's choosing abroad. In vain the bailiffs used all their arts to decoy me from my citadel ; in vain they sent to let me know, that a gentleman wanted to speak with me at the next tavern ; in vain they came with an urgent message from my aunt in the country ; in vain I was told, that a particular friend was at the point of death, and desired to take his last farewell ; I was deaf, insensible, rock, ada-

mant: the bailiffs could make no impression on my hard heart, for I effectually kept my liberty, by never stirring out of the room.

“This was very well for a fortnight, when one morning I received a most splendid message from the Earl of Doomsday, importing, that he had read my book, and was in raptures with every line of it: he impatiently longed to see the author, and had some designs, which might turn out greatly to my advantage. I paused upon the contents of this message, and found there could be no deceit, for the card was gilt at the edges, and the bearer, I was told, had quite the looks of a gentleman. Witness, ye powers, how my heart triumphed at my own importance! I saw a long perspective of felicity before me. I applauded the taste of the times, which never saw genius forsaken. I had prepared a set introductory speech for the occasion; five glaring compliments for his lordship, and two more modest for myself. The next morning, therefore, in order to be punctual to my appointment, I took coach, and ordered the fellow to drive to the street and house mentioned in his lordship’s address. I had the precaution to pull up the windows as I went along, to keep off the busy part of mankind; and, big with expectation, fancied the coach never went fast enough. At length, however, the wished-for moment of its stopping arrived: this, for some time, I impatiently expected; and, letting down the door in a transport, in order to take a previous view of his lordship’s magnificent palace and situation, I found—poison to my sight! I found myself, not in an elegant street, but in a paltry lane; not at a nobleman’s door, but the door of a spunging-house. I found the coachman had all this while been driving me to gaol, and saw the bailiff, with a devil’s face, coming out to secure me.”

To a philosopher, no circumstance, however

trifling, is too minute ; he finds instruction and entertainment in occurrences which are passed over by the rest of mankind, as low, trite and indifferent ; it is from the number of these particulars, which to many appear insignificant, that he is at last enabled to form general conclusions. This, therefore, must be my excuse for sending so far as China, accounts of manners and follies, which, though minute in their own nature, serve more truly to characterize this people, than histories of their public treaties, courts, ministers, negociations, and ambassadors. Adieu.

Letter from the same.

IN a late excursion with my friend into the country, a gentleman with a blue ribband tied round his shoulder, and in a chariot drawn by six horses, passed swiftly by us, attended with a numerous train of captains, lackeys, and coaches filled with women. When we were recovered from the dust raised by this cavalcade, and could continue our discourse without danger of suffocation, I observed to my companion, that all this state and equipage, which he seemed to despise, would in China be regarded with the utmost reverence, because such distinctions were always the reward of merit ; the greatness of a mandarine's retinue being a most certain mark of the superiority of his abilities or virtue.

“ The gentleman who has now passed us,” replied my companion, “ has no claims, from his own merit, to distinction ; he is possessed neither of abilities nor virtue ; it is enough for him that one of his ancestors was possessed of these qualities two hundred years before him. There was a time, indeed, when his family deserved their titles, but they are long since degenerated ; and his ancestors, for more

than a century, have been more solicitous to keep up the breed of their dogs and horses, than that of their children. This very nobleman, simple as he seems, is descended from a race of statesmen and heroes; but unluckily his great grandfather marrying a cookmaid, and she having a trifling passion for his lordship's groom, they somehow crossed the strain, and produced an heir, who took after his mother in his great love to good eating, and his father, in a violent affection for horse flesh. These passions have, for some generations, passed on from father to son, and are now become the characteristics of the family; his present lordship being equally remarkable for his kitchen and his stable."

"But such a nobleman," cried I, "deserves our pity, thus placed in so high a sphere of life, which only the more exposes to contempt. A king may confer titles, but it is personal merit alone that insures respect. I suppose," added I, "that such men, who are so very unfit to fill up their dignity, are despised by their equals, neglected by their inferiors, and condemned to live among involuntary dependants, in irksome solitude."

"You are still under mistake," replied my companion: "for though this nobleman is a stranger to generosity; though he takes twenty opportunities in a day of letting his guests know how much he despises them; though he is possessed neither of taste, wit, nor wisdom; though incapable of improving others by his conversation, and never known to enrich any by his bounty; yet, for all this, his company is eagerly sought after: he is a lord, and that is as much as most people desire in a companion. Quality and title have such allurements, that hundreds are ready to give up all their own importance, to cringe, to flatter, and to look little, and to pall every pleasure in constraint, merely to be among the great, though without the

least hopes of improving their understanding, or sharing their generosity: they might be happy among their equals, but those are despised for company, where they are despised in turn. You saw what a crowd of humble cousins, card-ruined beaux, and captains on half-pay, were willing to make up this great man's retinue down to his country-seat: not one of all these who could not lead a more comfortable life at home, in their little lodging of three shillings a week, with their lukewarm dinner, served up between two pewter plates from a cook's shop; yet, poor devils, they are willing to undergo the impertinence and pride of their entertainer, merely to be thought to live among the great: they are willing to pass the summer in bondage, though conscious they are taken down only to approve his lordship's taste upon every occasion, to tag all his stupid observations with a *very true*, to praise his stable, and descant upon his claret and cookery."

"The pitiful humiliations of the gentlemen you are now describing," said I, "puts me in mind of a custom among the Tartars of Koreki, not entirely dissimilar to this we are now considering. The Russians, who trade with them, carry thither a kind of mushrooms, which they exchange for furs of squirrels, ermines, sables, and foxes. These mushrooms the rich Tartars lay up in large quantities for the winter: and when a nobleman makes a mushroom feast, all the neighbours around are invited. The mushrooms are prepared by boiling, by which the water acquires an intoxicating quality, and is a sort of drink which the Tartars prize beyond all other. When the nobility and ladies are assembled, and the ceremonies usual between the people of distinction over, the mushroom broth goes freely round; they laugh, talk double entendre, grow fuddled, and become excellent company. The poorer sort, who love mushroom broth to distraction, as well as the

rich, but cannot afford it at the first hand, post themselves, on these occasions, round the huts of the rich, and watch the opportunities of the ladies and gentlemen, as they come down to pass their liquor; and, holding a wooden bowl, catch the delicious fluid, very little altered by filtration, being still strongly tingured with the intoxicating quality. - Of this they drink with the utmost satisfaction; and thus they get as drunk and as jovial as their betters."

"Happy nobility!" cries my companion, "who can fear no diminution of respect unless by being seized with a strangury; and who, when most drunk, are most useful. Though we have not this custom among us, I foresee that, if it were introduced, we might have many a toad-eater in England ready to drink from the wooden bowl on these occasions, and to praise the flavour of his lordship's liquor. As we have different classes of gentry, who knows but we might see a lord holding a bowl to a minister, a knight holding it to his lordship, and a simple squire drinking it, double-distilled from the loins of knighthood? For my part, I shall never, for the future, hear a great man's flatterers haranguing in his praise, that I shall not fancy I behold the wooden bowl; for I can see no reason why a man, who can live easily and happily at home, should bear the drudgery of decorum, and the impertinence of his entertainer, unless intoxicated with a passion for all that was quality; unless he thought that whatever came from the great was delicious, and had the tincture of the mushroom in it. Adieu.

Letter from Lien Chi Altangi, to Hingpo, a Slave in Persia.

IT is impossible to form a philosophic system of happiness, which is adapted to every condition in life, since every person who travels in this great pur-

suit takes a separate road. The different colours, which suit different complexions, are not more various than the different pleasures appropriated to particular minds. The various sects who have pretended to give lessons to instruct men in happiness, have described their own particular sensations, without considering ours; have only loaded their disciples with constraint, without adding to their real felicity.

If I find pleasure in dancing, how ridiculous would it be to me to prescribe such an amusement for the entertainment of a cripple? Should he, on the other hand, place his chief delight in painting, yet would he be absurd in recommending the same relish to one who had lost the power of distinguishing colours. General directions are therefore commonly useless, and to be particular would exhaust volumes, since each individual may require a peculiar system of precepts to direct his choice.

Every mind seems capable of entertaining a certain quantity of happiness, which no institution can increase, no circumstances alter, and entirely independent on fortune. Let any man compare his present fortune with the past, and he will probably find himself, upon the whole, neither better nor worse than formerly.

Gratified ambition, or irreparable calamity, may produce transient sensations of pleasure or distress. Those storms may discompose in proportion as they are strong, or the mind is pliant to their impression. But the soul, though at first lifted up by the event, is every day operated upon with diminished influence, and at length subsides into the level of its usual tranquillity. Should some unexpected turn of fortune take thee from fetters, and place thee on a throne, exultation would be natural upon the change; but the temper, like the face, would soon resume its native serenity.

Every wish, therefore, which leads us to expect

happiness somewhere else than where we are, every institution which teaches us that we should be better by being possessed of something new, which promises to lift us a step higher than we are, only lays a foundation for uneasiness, because it contracts debts which it cannot repay: it calls that a good, which, when we have found it, will, in fact, add nothing to our happiness.

To enjoy the present, without regret for the past or solicitude for the future, has been the advice rather of poets than philosophers. And the precept seems more rational than is generally imagined. It is the only general precept respecting the pursuit of happiness, that can be applied with propriety to every condition of life. The man of pleasure, the man of business, and the philosopher, are equally interested in its disquisition. If we do not find happiness in the present moment, in what shall we find it? Either in reflecting on the past, or prognosticating the future. But let us see how these are capable of producing satisfaction.

A remembrance of what is past, and an anticipation of what is to come, seem to be two faculties by which man differs most from other animals. Though brutes enjoy them in a limited degree, yet their whole life seems taken up in the present, regardless of the past and future. Man, on the contrary, endeavours to derive his happiness, and experiences most of his miseries, from these two sources.

Is this superiority of reflection a prerogative of which we should boast, and for which we shall thank Nature? Or, is it a misfortune, of which we should complain and be humble? Either from the abuse, or from the nature of things, it certainly makes our condition more miserable.

Had we a privilege of calling up, by the power of memory, only such passages as were pleasing, unmixed with such as were disagreeable, we might

then excite, at pleasure, an ideal happiness, perhaps more poignant than actual sensation. But this is not the case; the past is never represented without some disagreeable circumstance, which tarnishes all its beauty; the remembrance of an evil carries in itself nothing disagreeable; and to remember a good, is always accompanied with regret. Thus we lose more than we gain by remembrance.

And we shall find our expectation of the future to be a gift more distressful even than the former. To fear an approaching evil is certainly a most disagreeable sensation: and, in expecting an approaching good, we experience the inquietude of wanting actual possession.

Thus, whichever way we look, the prospect is disagreeable. Behind, we have left pleasures we shall never more enjoy, and therefore regret; and, before, we see pleasures which we languish to possess, and are consequently uneasy till we possess them. Was there any method of seizing the present, unembittered by such reflections, then would our state be tolerably easy.

This, indeed, is the endeavour of all mankind, who, untutored by philosophy, pursue, as much as they can, a life of amusement and dissipation. Every rank in life, and every size of understanding, seems to follow this alone; or, not pursuing it, deviates from happiness. The man of pleasure pursues dissipation by profession: the man of business pursues it not less; as every voluntary labour he undergoes is only dissipation in disguise. The philosopher himself, even while he reasons upon the subject, does it knowingly, with a view of dissipating the thoughts of what he was, or what he must be.

The subject, therefore, comes to this, Which is the most perfect sort of dissipation; pleasure, business, or philosophy? which best serves to exclude those uneasy sensations which memory or anticipation produce?

The enthusiasm of pleasure charms only by intervals. The highest rapture lasts only for a moment; and all the senses seem so combined, as to be soon tired into languor by the gratification of any one of them. It is only among the poets we hear of men changing to one delight when satiated with another. In nature it is very different: the glutton, when sated with the full meal, is unqualified to feel the real pleasure of drinking; the drunkard, in turn, finds few of those transports which lovers boast in enjoyment; and the lover, when cloyed, finds a diminution of every other appetite. Thus, after a full indulgence of any one sense, the man of pleasure finds a languor in all; is placed in a chasm between past and expected enjoyment; perceives an interval which must be filled up. The present can give no satisfaction, because he has already robbed it of every charm. A mind thus left, without immediate employment, naturally recurs to the past or the future; the reflector finds that he was happy, and knows that he cannot be so now; he sees that he may yet be happy, and wishes the hour was come. Thus every period of his continuance is miserable, except that very short one of immediate gratification. Instead of a life of dissipation, none has more frequent conversation with disagreeable self than he: his enthusiasms are but few and transient; his appetites, like angry creditors, continually making fruitless demands for what he is unable to pay; and the greater his former pleasure, the more strong his regret, the more impatient his expectations. A life of pleasure is, therefore, the most unpleasing life in the world.

Habit has rendered the man of business more cool in his desires; he finds less regret for past pleasures, and less solicitude for those to come. The life he now leads, though tainted in some measure with hope, is yet not afflicted so strongly with regret, and is less divided between short-lived rapture

and lasting anguish. The pleasures he has enjoyed are not so vivid, and those he has to expect cannot consequently create so much anxiety.

The philosopher, who extends his regard to all mankind, must have still a smaller concern for what has already affected, or may hereafter affect himself: the concerns of others make his whole study, and that is his pleasure; and this pleasure is continuing in its nature, because it can be changed at will, leaving but few of those anxious intervals which are employed in remembrance or anticipation. The philosopher, by this means, leads a life of almost continued dissipation: and reflection, which makes the uneasiness and misery of others, serves as a companion and instructor to him.

In a word, positive happiness is constitutional, and incapable of increase: misery is artificial, and generally proceeds from our folly. Philosophy can add to our happiness in no other manner but by diminishing our misery: it should not pretend to increase our present stock, but make us economists of what we are possessed of. The great source of calamity lies in regret or anticipation: he therefore is the most wise, who thinks of the present alone, regardless of the past or future. This is impossible to the man of pleasure: it is difficult to the man of business; and is, in some measure, attainable by the philosopher. Happy, were we all born philosophers, all with a talent of thus dissipating our own cares, by spreading them upon all mankind! Adieu.

Letter from Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, First President of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

THOUGH the frequent invitations I receive from men of distinction here might excite the vanity of some, I am quite mortified, however, when I consi-

der the motives that inspire their civility. I am sent for, not to be treated as a friend, but to satisfy curiosity : not to be entertained so much as wondered at ; the same earnestness which excites them to see a Chinese, would have made them equally proud of a visit from the rhinoceros.

From the highest to the lowest, this people seem fond of sights and monsters. I am told of a person here who gets a very comfortable livelihood by making wonders, and then selling or showing them to the people for money, no matter how insignificant they were in the beginning ; by locking them up close, and showing for money, they soon become prodigies. His first essay in this way was to exhibit himself as a wax work figure behind a glass door at a puppet show. Thus, keeping the spectators at a proper distance, and having his head adorned with a copper crown, he looked extremely natural, and very like the life itself. He continued the exhibition with success, till an involuntary fit of sneezing brought him to life before all the spectators, and consequently rendered him, for that time, as entirely useless as the peaceable inhabitant of a catacomb.

Determined to act the statue no more, he next levied contributions under the figure of an Indian king ; and by painting his face, and counterfeiting the savage howl, he frightened several ladies and children with amazing success. In this manner, therefore, he might have lived very comfortably, had he not been arrested for a debt that was contracted when he was the figure in wax-work. Thus, his face underwent an involuntary ablution, and he found himself reduced to his primitive complexion and indigence.

After some time, being freed from gaol, he was now grown wiser, and, instead of making himself a wonder, was resolved only to make wonders. He learned the art of pasting up mummies ; was

never at a loss for an artificial *lusus naturæ*; nay, it has been reported that he has sold seven petrified lobsters, of his own manufacture, to a noted collector of rarities: but this the learned Cracovius Putridus has undertaken to refute in a very elaborate dissertation.

His last wonder was nothing more than an halter; yet, by this halter, he gained more than by all his former exhibitions. The people, it seems, had got it in their heads, that a certain noble criminal was to be hanged with a silken rope. Now, there was nothing they so much desired to see as this very rope, and he was resolved to gratify their curiosity. He therefore got one made, not only of silk, but to render it the more striking, several threads of gold were intermixed. The people paid their money only to see silk, but were highly satisfied when they found it was mixed with gold into the bargain. It was scarce necessary to mention, that the projector sold his silken rope for almost what it had cost him, as soon as the criminal was known to be hanged in hempen materials.

By their fondness for sights, one would be apt to imagine, that, instead of desiring to see things as they should be, they are rather solicitous of seeing them as they ought not to be. A cat with four legs is disregarded, though never so useful; but if it has but two, and is consequently incapable of catching mice, it is reckoned inestimable, and every man of taste is ready to raise the auction. A man, though in his person faultless as an aërial genius, might starve; but, if stuck over with hideous warts like a porcupine, his fortune is made for ever; and he may propagate the breed with impunity and applause.

A good woman in my neighbourhood, who was bred an habit maker, though she handled her needle tolerably well, could scarcely get employ-

ment; but, being obliged, by an accident, to have both her hands cut off from the elbows, what would, in another country, have been her ruin, made her fortune here: she now was thought more fit for her trade than before; business flowed in apace, and all the people paid for seeing the mantuamaker who wrought without hands.

A gentleman showing me his collection of pictures, stopped at one with peculiar admiration: "There," cries he, "is an inestimable piece." I gazed at the picture for some time, but could see none of those graces with which he seemed enraptured; it appeared to me the most paltry piece of the whole collection. I therefore demanded where those beauties lay, of which I was yet insensible. "Sir," cries he, "the merit does not consist in the piece, but in the manner in which it was done: the painter drew the whole with his foot, and held the pencil between his toes: I bought it at a very great price; for peculiar merit should be ever rewarded."

But these people are not more fond of wonders, than liberal in rewarding those who show them. From the wonderful dog of knowledge, at present under the patronage of the nobility, down to the man with the box, who professes to show the most perfect imitation of nature that ever was seen, they all live in luxury. A singing woman shall collect subscriptions in her own coach and six: a fellow shall make a fortune by tossing a straw from his toe to his nose: one, in particular, has found, that eating fire was the most ready way to live; and another, who jingles several bells fixed to his cap, is the only man that I know of who has received emolument from the labours of his head.

A young author, a man of good-nature and learning, was complaining to me, some nights ago, of this misplaced generosity of the times. "Here,"

says he, "have I spent part of my youth in attempting to instruct and amuse my fellow creatures, and all my reward has been solitude, poverty, and reproach; while a fellow possessed even of the smallest share of fiddling merit, or who has, perhaps, learned to whistle double, is rewarded, applauded, and caressed!" "Pr'ythee, young man," says I to him, "are you ignorant, that, in so large a city as this is, it is better to be an amusing than an useful member of society? Can you leap up, and touch your feet four times before you come to the ground?" "No, Sir." "Can you pimp for a man of quality?" "No, Sir." "Can you stand upon two horses at full speed?" "No, Sir." "Can you swallow a penknife?" "I can do none of these tricks." "Why, then," cried I, "there is no other prudent means of subsistence left, but to apprise the town, that you speedily intend to eat up your own nose by subscription."

I have frequently regretted, that none of our eastern posture masters, or showmen, have ever ventured to England. I should be pleased to see that money circulate in Asia which is now sent to Italy and France, in order to bring their vagabonds hither. Several of our tricks would undoubtedly give the English high satisfaction. Men of fashion would be greatly pleased with the postures, as well as the condescension, of our dancing girls; and ladies would equally admire the conductors of our fire works. What an agreeable surprise would it be to see a huge fellow with whiskers flash a charged blunderbuss full in a lady's face, without singing her hair, or melting her pomatum? Perhaps, when the first surprise was over, she might then grow familiar with danger; and the ladies might vie with each other in standing fire with intrepidity.

But, of all the wonders of the east, the most use-

ful, and I should fancy the most pleasing, would be the looking-glass of Lao, which reflects the mind as well as the body. It is said that the emperor Chusi used to make his concubines dress their heads and their hearts in one of those glasses every morning: while the lady was at her toilet, he would frequently look over her shoulder; and it is recorded, that among the three hundred which composed his seraglio, not one was found whose mind was not even more beautiful than her person.

I make no doubt but a glass in this country would have the very same effect. The English ladies, concubines and all, would undoubtedly cut very pretty figures in so faithful a monitor. There, should we happen to peep over a lady's shoulder while dressing, we might be able to see neither gaming nor ill-nature; neither pride, debauchery, nor a love of gadding. We should find her, if any sensible defect appeared in the mind, more careful in rectifying it than plastering up the irreparable decays of the person; nay, I am even apt to fancy, that the ladies would find more real pleasure in this utensil in private, than in any other bauble imported from China, though never so expensive or amusing.

Letter from Lien Chi Altangi to Hingpo.

THE news of your freedom lifts the load of former anxiety from my mind: I can now think of my son without regret, applaud his resignation under calamity, and his conduct in extricating himself from it.

"You are now free, just let loose from the bondage of an hard master." This is the crisis of your fate; and, as you now manage fortune, suc-

ceeding life will be marked with happiness or misery. A few years' perseverance in prudence, which, at your age, is but another name for virtue, will insure comfort, pleasure, tranquillity, and esteem: too eager an enjoyment of every good that now offers will reverse the medal, and present you with poverty, anxiety, remorse, and contempt.

As it has been observed, that none are better qualified to give others advice than those who have taken the least of it themselves, so, in this respect, I find myself perfectly authorised to offer mine, even though I should wave my paternal authority upon this occasion.

The most usual way among young men, who have no resolution of their own, is first to ask one friend's advice, and follow it for some time; to ask advice of another, and turn to that; so of a third, still unsteady, always changing. However, be assured, that every change of this nature is for the worse: people may tell you of your being unfit for some peculiar occupations in life; but heed them not. Whatever employment you follow with perseverance and assiduity will be found fit for you: it will be your support in youth, and comfort in age. In learning the useful part of every profession, very moderate abilities will suffice; even if the mind be a little balanced with stupidity, it may, in this case, be useful. Great abilities have always been less serviceable to the possessors than moderate ones. Life has been compared to a race; but the allusion still improves by observing, that the most swift are ever the least manageable.

To know one profession only is enough for one man to know; and this (whatever the professors may tell you to the contrary) is soon learned. Be contented, therefore, with one good employment;

for if you understand two at a time, people will give you business in neither.

A conjuror and a tailor once happened to converse together. "Alas!" cries the tailor, "what an unhappy poor creature am I! If people should ever take it in their heads to live without clothes, I am undone; I have no other trade to have recourse to." "Indeed, friend, I pity you sincerely," replies the conjuror; "but, thank heaven, things are not quite so bad with me; for if one trick should fail, I have an hundred tricks more for them yet. However, if at any time you are reduced to beggary, apply to me, and I will relieve you." A famine overspread the land; the tailor made a shift to live, because his customers could not be without clothes; but the poor conjuror, with all his hundred tricks, could find none that had money to throw away: it was in vain that he promised to eat fire, or to vomit pigs; no single creature would relieve him, till at last he was obliged to beg from the very tailor whose calling he had formerly despised.

There are no obstructions more fatal to fortune than pride and resentment. If you must resent injuries at all, at least suppress your indignation until you become rich, and then show away: the resentment of a poor man is like the efforts of a harmless insect to sting; it may get him crushed, but cannot defend him. Who values that anger which is consumed only in empty menaces?

Once upon a time, a goose fed its young by a pond side; and a goose, in such circumstances, is always extremely proud, and excessively punctilious. If any other animal, without the least design to offend, happened to pass that way, the goose was immediately at him. The pond, she said, was hers, and she would maintain a right in it, and support her honour, while she had a

bill to hiss, or a wing to flutter. In this manner she drove away ducks, pigs, and chickens; nay, even the insidious cat was seen to scamper. A lounging mastiff, however, happened to pass by, and thought it no harm if he should lap a little of the water, as he was thirsty. The guardian goose flew at him like a fury, pecked at him with her beak, and flapped him with her feathers. The dog grew angry, and had twenty times a mind to give her a sly snap; but suppressing his indignation, because his master was nigh, "A pox take thee," cries he, "for a fool; sure those who have neither strength nor weapons to fight, at least should be civil: that fluttering and hissing of thine may one day get thine head snapt off; but it can neither injure thy enemies, nor ever protect thee." So saying, he went forward to the pond, quenched his thirst in spite of the goose, and followed his master.

Another obstruction to the fortune of youth is, that while they are willing to take offence from none, they are also equally desirous of giving no offence. From hence they endeavour to please all; comply with every request; attempt to suit themselves to every company; have no will of their own, but, like wax, catch every contiguous impression. By thus attempting to give universal satisfaction, they at last find themselves miserably disappointed. To bring the generality of admirers on our side, it is sufficient to attempt pleasing a very few.

A painter of eminence was once resolved to finish a piece that should please the whole world. When, therefore, he had drawn a picture, in which his utmost skill was exhausted, it was exposed in the public market place, with directions at the bottom for every spectator to mark, with a brush that lay by, every limb and feature which seemed erro-

neous. The spectators came, and in general applauded ; but each, willing to show his talent at criticism, marked whatever he thought proper. At evening, when the painter came, he was mortified to find the whole picture one universal blot ! not a single stroke that was not stigmatised with marks of disapprobation. Not satisfied with this trial, the next day he was resolved to try them in a different manner ; and, exposing his picture as before, desired that every spectator would mark those beauties he approved or admired. The people complied, and the artist returning, found his picture replete with the marks of beauty ; every stroke that had been yesterday condemned now received the character of approbation. “ Well,” cries the painter, “ I now find, that the best way to please one half of the world is not to mind what the other half says ; since what are faults in the eyes of these, shall be by those regarded as beauties.”

Adieu.

Letter from the same.

THE princes of Europe have found out a manner of rewarding their subjects who have behaved well by presenting them with about two yards of blue ribbon, which is worn about the shoulder. They who are honoured with this mark of distinction are called knights, and the king himself is always the head of the order. This is a very frugal method of recompensing the most important service ; and it is very fortunate for kings, that their subjects are satisfied with such trifling rewards. Should a nobleman happen to lose his leg in a battle, the king presents him with two yards of ribbon, and he is paid for the loss of his limb. Should an ambassador spend all his paternal fortune in supporting the honour of his country abroad, the king pre-

sents him with two yards of ribbon, which is to be considered as equivalent to his estate. In short, while an European king has a yard of blue or green ribbon left, he need be under no apprehensions of wanting statesmen, generals, and soldiers.

I cannot sufficiently admire those kingdoms in which men with large patrimonial estates are willing thus to undergo real hardships for empty favours. A person already possessed of a competent fortune, who undertakes to enter the career of ambition, feels many inconveniences from his station, while it procures him no real happiness that he was not possessed of before. He could eat, drink, and sleep, before he became a courtier, as well, perhaps better, than when invested with his authority. He could command flatterers in a private station, as well as in his public capacity; and indulge at home every favourite inclination, uncensured and unseen by the people.

What real good, then, does an addition to a fortune, already sufficient, procure? Not any. Could the great man, by having his fortune increased, increase also his appetites, then precedence might be attended with real amusement.

Was he, by having his one thousand made two, thus enabled to enjoy two wives, or eat two dinners, then, indeed, he might be excused for undergoing some pain, in order to extend the sphere of his enjoyments. But, on the contrary, he finds his desire for pleasure often lessen as he takes pains to be able to improve it; and his capacity of enjoyment diminishes as his fortune happens to increase.

Instead, therefore, of regarding the great with envy, I generally consider them with some share of compassion; I look upon them as a set of good-natured misguided people, who are indebted to us, and not to themselves, for all the happiness they

enjoy. For our pleasure, and not their own, they sweat under a cumbrous heap of finery; for our pleasure the lacqueyed train, the slow parading pageant, with all the gravity of grandeur, moves in review; a single coat, or a single footman, answers all the purposes of the most indolent refinement as well; and those who have twenty may be said to keep one for their own pleasure, and the other nineteen merely for ours. So true is the observation of Confucius, that we take greater pains to persuade others that we are happy, than in endeavouring to think so ourselves.

But though this desire of being seen, of being made the subject of discourse, and of supporting the dignities of an exalted station, be troublesome enough to the ambitious, yet it is well for society that there are men thus willing to exchange ease and safety for danger and a ribbon. We lose nothing by their vanity, and it would be unkind to endeavour to deprive a child of its rattle. If a duke or a duchess are willing to carry a long train for our entertainment, so much the worse for themselves: if they choose to exhibit in public with an hundred lacqueys and mamelukes in their equipage for our entertainment, still so much the worse for themselves: it is the spectators alone who give and receive the pleasure; they only the sweating figures that swell the pageant.

A mandarine, who took much pride in appearing with a number of jewels on every part of his robe, was once accosted by an old sly bonze, who, following him through several streets, and bowing often to the ground, thanked him for his jewels. "What does the man mean?" cried the mandarine; "friend, I never gave thee any of my jewels." "No," replied the other, "but you have let me look at them, and that is all the use you can

make of them yourself; so there is no difference between us, except that you have the trouble of watching them, and that is an employment I don't much desire." Adieu.

Letter from the same.

THOUGH not very fond of seeing a pageant myself, yet I am generally pleased with being in the crowd which sees it: it is amusing to observe the effect which such a spectacle has upon the variety of faces; the pleasure it excites in some, the envy in others, and the wishes it raises in all. With this design I lately went to see the entry of a foreign ambassador, resolved to make one in the mob, to shout as they shouted, to fix with earnestness upon the same frivolous objects, and participate for a while the pleasures and the wishes of the vulgar.

Struggling here for some time, in order to be first to see the cavalcade as it passed, some one of the crowd unluckily happened to tread upon my shoe, and tore it in such a manner, that I was utterly unqualified to march forward with the main body, and obliged to fall back in the rear. Thus rendered incapable of being a spectator of the show myself, I was at least willing to observe the spectators, and limped behind, like one of the invalids who follow the march of an army.

In this plight, as I was considering the eagerness that appeared in every face, how some hustled to get foremost, and others contented themselves with taking a transient peep when they could; how some praised the four black servants that were stuck behind one of the equipages, and some the ribbons that decorated the horses' necks in another; my attention was called off to an object more extraordinary than any I had yet seen: a poor cobbler sat in his

stall by the way side, and continued to work while the crowd passed by, without testifying the smallest share of curiosity. I own his want of attention excited mine; and as I stood in need of his assistance, I thought it best to employ a philosophic cobbler on this occasion; perceiving my business therefore, he desired me to enter and sit down, took my shoe in his lap, and began to mend it with his usual indifference and taciturnity.

"How, my friend," said I to him, "can you continue to work, while all those fine things are passing by your door?" "Very fine they are, master," returned the cobbler, "for those that like them, to be sure: but what are all those fine things to me? You don't know what it is to be a cobbler, and so much the better for yourself. Your bread is baked; you may go and see sights the whole day, and eat a warm supper when you come home at night; but for me, if I should run hunting after all these fine folk, what should I get by my journey but an appetite? and, God help me, I have too much of that at home already, without stirring out for it. Your people, who may eat four meals a day, and a supper at night, are but a bad example to such a one as I. — No, master, as God has called me into this world in order to mend old shoes, I have no business with fine folk, and they no business with me." I here interrupted him with a smile. "See this last, master," continues he, "and this hammer; this last and hammer are the two best friends I have in this world; nobody else will be my friend, because I want a friend. The great folks you saw pass by just now have five hundred friends, because they have no occasion for them; now, while I stick to my good friends here, I am very contented; but, when I ever so little run after sights and fine things, I begin to hate my work; I grow sad, and have no heart to mend shoes any longer."

This discourse only served to raise my curiosity to know more of a man whom nature had thus formed into a philosopher. I therefore insensibly led him into an history of his adventures: "I have lived," said he, "a wandering life, now five-and-fifty years, here to day and gone to morrow; for it was my misfortune, when I was young, to be fond of changing." "You have been a traveller then, I presume?" interrupted I. "I can't boast much of travelling," continued he, "for I have never left the parish in which I was born but three times in my life, that I can remember; but then there is not a street in the whole neighbourhood that I have not lived in at some time or another. When I began to settle and take to my business in one street, some unforeseen misfortune, or a desire of trying my luck elsewhere, has removed me, perhaps a whole mile, away from my former customers, while some more lucky cobbler would come into my place, and make a handsome fortune among friends of my making. There was one who actually died, in the stall that I had left, worth seven pounds seven shillings, all in hard gold, which he had quilted into the waistband of his breeches."

I could not but smile at these migrations of a man by the fire side, and continued to ask, If he had ever been married? "Ay, that I have, master," replied he, "for sixteen long years; and a weary life I had of it, heaven knows. My wife took it in her head, that the only way to thrive in the world was to save money; so, though our incomings were but three shillings a week, all that she ever could lay her hands upon she used to hide away from me, though we were obliged to starve the whole week after for it.

"The first three years we used to quarrel about this every day, and I always got the better; but she had a hard spirit, and still continued to hide as

usual ; so that I was at last tired of quarrelling and getting the better, and she scraped and scraped at pleasure, till I was almost starved to death. Her conduct drove me at last in despair to the alehouse ; here I used to sit, with people who hated home like myself, drank while I had money left, and run in score when any body would trust me ; till at last the landlady coming one day with a long bill, when I was from home, and putting it into my wife's hands, the length of it effectually broke her heart. I searched the whole stall, after she was dead, for money ; but she had hidden it so effectually, that, with all my pains, I could never find a farthing."

By this time my shoe was mended, and satisfying the poor artist for his trouble, and rewarding him besides for his information, I took my leave, and returned home to lengthen out the amusement his conversation afforded, by communicating it to my friend. Adieu.

Letter from the same.

BOOKS, my son, while they teach us to respect the interests of others, often make us unmindful of our own : while they instruct the youthful reader to grasp at social happiness, he grows miserable in detail, and, attentive to universal harmony, often forgets that he himself has a part to sustain in the concert. I dislike, therefore, the philosopher who describes the inconveniences of life in such pleasing colours, that the pupil grows enamoured of distress, longs to try the charms of poverty, meets it without dread, nor fears its inconveniences till he severely feels them.

A youth, who has thus spent his life among books, new to the world, and unacquainted with man but by philosophic information, may be considered as a

being whose mind is filled with the vulgar errors of the wise; utterly unqualified for a journey through life, yet confident of his own skill in the direction, he sets out with confidence, blunders on with vanity, and finds himself at last undone.

He first has learned from books, and then lays it down as a maxim, That all mankind are virtuous or vicious in excess; and he has been long taught to detest vice, and love virtue. Warm, therefore, in attachments, and stedfast in enmity, he treats every creature as a friend or foe; expects from those that he loves unerring integrity, and consigns his enemies to the reproach of wanting every virtue. On this principle he proceeds; and here begin his disappointments. Upon a closer inspection of human nature, he perceives that he should have moderated his friendship, and softened his severity; for he often finds the excellencies of one part of mankind clouded with vice, and the faults of the other brightened with virtue; he finds no character so sanctified that has not its failings, none so infamous but has somewhat to attract our esteem; he beholds impiety in laws, and fidelity in fetters.

He now, therefore, but too late, perceives that his regards should have been more cool, and his hatred less violent; that the truly wise seldom court romantic friendship with the good, and avoid, if possible, the resentment of the wicked: every moment gives him fresh instances, that even the bonds of friendship are broken if drawn too closely, and that those whom he has treated with disrespect more than retaliate the injury. At length, therefore, he is obliged to confess that he has declared war upon the vicious half of mankind, without being able to form an alliance among the virtuous to espouse his quarrel.

Our book-taught philosopher, however, is now too far advanced to recede; and though poverty be the

just consequence of the many enemies his conduct has created, yet he has resolved to meet it without shrinking. Philosophers have described poverty in most charming colours; and even his vanity is touched in thinking that he shall show the world, in himself, one more example of patience, fortitude, and resignation. "Come then, O poverty! for what is there in thee dreadful to the wise? Temperance, health, and frugality, walk in thy train; cheerfulness and liberty are ever thy companions. Shall any be ashamed of thee, of whom Cincinnatus was not ashamed; the running brook, the herbs of the field, can amply satisfy nature. Man wants but little, nor that little long. Come then, O poverty! while kings stand by and gaze with admiration at the philosopher's true resignation."

The goddess appears; for poverty ever comes at the call; but alas! he finds her by no means the charming figure books and his warm imagination had painted. As when an Eastern bride, whom her friends and relations had long described as a model of perfection, pays her first visit, the longing bridegroom lifts the veil to see a face he had never seen before! but, instead of a countenance blazing with beauty like the sun, he beholds deformity shooting icicles to his heart: such appears poverty to her new entertainer; all the fabric of enthusiasm is at once demolished, and a thousand miseries rise upon its ruins; while contempt, with pointing finger, is foremost in the hideous procession.

The poor man now finds that he can get no kings to look at him while he is eating; he finds that, in proportion as he grows poor, the world turns its back upon him, and gives him leave to act the philosopher in all the majesty of solitude. It might be agreeable enough to play the philosopher, while we are conscious that mankind are spectators. But what signifies wearing the mask of sturdy content-

ment, and mounting the stage of restraint, when not one creature will assist at the exhibition? Thus is he forsaken of men, while his fortitude wants the satisfaction even of self-applause: for either he does not feel his present calamities, and that is natural insensibility; or he disguises his feelings, and that is dissimulation.

Spleen now begins to take up the man: not distinguishing in his resentments, he regards all mankind with detestation, and, commencing man-hater, seeks solitude to be at liberty to rail.

It has been said, that he who retires to solitude is either a beast or an angel. The censure is too severe, and the praise unmerited. The discontented being, who retires from society, is generally some good-natured man, who has begun his life without experience, and knew not how to gain it in his intercourse with mankind. Adieu.

Letter from Lien Chi Altangi to Hingpo, by the way of Moscow.

THE Europeans are themselves blind, who describe Fortune without sight. No first-rate beauty ever had finer eyes, or saw more clearly; they who have no other trade but seeking their fortune, need never hope to find her; coquette-like, she flies from her close pursuers, and at last fixes on the plodding mechanic, who stays at home, and minds his business.

I am amazed how men can call her blind, when, by the company she keeps, she seems so very discerning. Wherever you see a gaming-table, be very sure fortune is not there: wherever you see a house with the doors open, be very sure fortune is not there: when you see a man whose pocket-holes are laced with gold, be satisfied fortune is not there: whenever you see a beautiful woman good-natured

and obliging, be convinced fortune is never there. In short, she is ever seen accompanying industry, and as often trundling a wheelbarrow as lolling in a coach and six.

If you would make fortune your friend, or, to personise her no longer, if you desire, my son, to be rich, and have money, be more eager to save than to acquire. When people say, "Money is to be got here," and "Money is to be got there," take no notice; mind your own business; stay where you are, and secure all you can get, without stirring. When you hear that your neighbour picked up a purse of gold in the street, never run out into the same street, looking about you, in order to pick up such another; or, when you are informed, that he has made a fortune in one branch of business, never change your own, in order to be his rival. Do not desire to be rich all at once, but patiently add farthing to farthing. Perhaps you despise the petty sum; and yet, they who want a farthing, and have no friend to lend them it, think farthings very good things. Whang, the foolish miller, when he wanted a farthing in his distress, found that no friend would lend, because they knew he wanted. Did you ever read the story of Whang, in our books of Chinese learning; he who, despising small sums, and grasping at all, lost even what he had.

Whang, the miller, was naturally avaricious; nobody loved money better than he, or more respected those that had it. When people would talk of a rich man in company, Whang would say, "I know him very well; he and I have been long acquainted; he and I are intimate; he stood for a child of mine." But if ever a poor man was mentioned, he had not the least knowledge of the man: he might be very well for aught he knew; but he was not fond of making many acquaintances, and loved to choose his company.

Whang, however, with all his eagerness for riches, was in reality poor. He had nothing but the profits of his mill to support him : but though these were small they were certain : while his mill stood and went, he was sure of eating ; and his frugality was such, that he every day laid some money by, which he would at intervals count and contemplate with much satisfaction. Yet still his acquisitions were not equal to his desires ; he only found himself above want, whereas he desired to be possessed of affluence.

One day, as he was indulging these wishes, he was informed, that a neighbour of his had found a pan of money under ground, having dreamed of it three nights running before. These tidings were daggers to the heart of poor Whang. " Here am I," says he, " toiling and moiling from morning to night for a few paltry farthings, while neighbour Hunks only goes quietly to bed, and dreams himself into thousands before morning. O that I could dream like him ! With what pleasure would I dig round the pan ! How shily would I carry it home ! Not even my wife would see me ! And then, O the pleasure of thrusting one's hand into a heap of gold up to the elbow ! "

Such reflections only served to make the miller unhappy : he discontinued his former assiduity ; he was quite disgusted with small gains, and his customers began to forsake him. Every day he repeated the wish, and every night laid himself down in order to dream. Fortune, that was for a long time unkind, at last, however, seemed to smile upon his distresses, and indulged him with the wished-for vision. He dreamed, that, under a certain part of the foundation of his mill, there was concealed a monstrous pan of gold and diamonds, buried deep in the ground, and covered with a large flat stone. He rose up, thanked the stars, that were at last pleased to take pity on

his sufferings, and concealed his good luck from every person, as is usual in money dreams, in order to have the vision repeated the two succeeding nights, by which he should be certain of its veracity. His wishes in this also were answered; he still dreamed of the same pan of money, in the very same place.

Now, therefore, it was past a doubt: so getting up early the third morning, he repairs alone, with a mattock in his hand, to the mill, and began to undermine that part of the wall which the vision directed. The first omen of success that he met was a broken mug; digging still deeper, he turns up a house-tile quite new and entire. At last, after much digging, he came to a broad, flat stone, but then so large, that it was beyond man's strength to remove it. "Here," cried he in raptures to himself, "here it is; under this stone there is room for a very large pan of diamonds indeed. I must e'en go home to my wife, and tell her the whole affair, and get her to assist me in turning it up." Away therefore he goes, and acquaints his wife with every circumstance of their good fortune. Her raptures on this occasion may easily be imagined; she flew round his neck, and embraced him in an agony of joy; but those transports, however, did not delay their eagerness to know the exact sum; returning, therefore, speedily together to the place where Whang had been digging, there they found—not, indeed, the expected treasure, but the mill, their only support, undermined and fallen. Adieu.

Letter from Lien Chi Altangi to Fum Hoam, First President of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking in China.

THE people of London are as fond of walking as our friends at Peking of riding. One of the

principal entertainments of the citizens here, in summer, is to repair about nightfall to a garden not far from town, where they walk about, show their best clothes and best faces, and listen to a concert provided for the occasion.

I accepted an invitation a few evenings ago, from my old friend, the man in black, to be one of the party that was to sup there, and at the appointed hour waited upon him at his lodgings. There I found the company assembled, and expecting my arrival. Our party consisted of my friend, dressed in superlative finery, his stockings rolled, a black velvet waistcoat, which was formerly new, and his grey wig combed down in imitation of hair; a pawnbroker's widow, of whom, by the bye, my friend was a professed admirer, dressed out in green damask, with three gold rings on every finger; Mr. Tibbs, the second-rate beau I have formerly described, together with his lady, in flimsy silk, dirty gauze instead of linen, and an hat as high as an umbrella.

Our first difficulty was in settling how we should set out. Mrs. Tibbs had a natural aversion to the water; and the widow, being a little in flesh, as warmly protested against walking; a coach was therefore agreed upon, which, being too small to carry five, Mr. Tibbs consented to sit in his wife's lap.

In this manner, therefore, we set forward, being entertained by the way with the bodings of Mr. Tibbs, who assured us he did not expect to see a single creature for the evening above the degree of a cheesemonger; that this was the last night of the gardens, and that, consequently, we should be pestered with the nobility and gentry from Thames Street and Crooked Lane, with several other prophetic ejaculations, probably inspired by the uneasiness of his situation.

The illuminations began before we arrived; and I must confess, that, upon entering the gardens, I found every sense overpaid with more than expected pleasure. The lights were everywhere glimmering through the scarcely moving trees; the full-bodied concert bursting on the stillness of the night; the natural concert of the birds, in the more retired part of the grove, vieing with that which was formed by art; the company gaily dressed, looking satisfaction, and the tables spread with various delicacies, all conspired to fill my imagination with the visionary happiness of the Arabian lawgiver, and lifted me into an ecstasy of admiration. "Head of Confucius," cried I to my friend, "this is fine! this unites rural beauty and courtly magnificence; if we except the virgins of immortality, that hang on every tree, and may be plucked at every desire, I don't see how this falls short of Mahomet's Paradise!" "As for virgins," cries my friend, "it is true they are a fruit that don't much abound in our gardens here; but if ladies as plenty as the apples are in autumn, and as complying as any Houry of them all, can content you, I fancy we have no need to go to Heaven for Paradise."

I was going to second his remarks, when we were called to a consultation by Mr. Tibbs, and the rest of the company, to know in what manner we were to lay out the evening to the greatest advantage. Mrs. Tibbs was for keeping the genteel walk of the garden, where, she observed, there was always the very best company: the widow, on the contrary, who came but once a season, was for securing a good standing-place to see the water-works, which, she assured us, would begin in less than an hour at farthest: a dispute, therefore, began, and, as it was managed between two of very opposite characters, it threatened to grow more bitter at every reply. Mrs. Tibbs wondered how people could pretend to

know the polite world, who had received all their rudiments of breeding behind a counter. To which the other replied, that though some people sat behind counters, yet they could sit at the head of their own tables too, and carve three good dishes of hot meat whenever they thought proper; which was more than some people could say for themselves, that hardly knew a rabbit and onions from a green goose and gooseberries.

It is hard to say where this might have ended, had not the husband, who probably knew the impetuosity of his wife's disposition, proposed to end the dispute by adjourning to a box, and try if there was any thing to be had for supper that was supportable. To this we all consented: but here a new distress arose: Mr. and Mrs. Tibbs would sit in none but a genteel box, a box where they might see and be seen; one, as they expressed it, in the very focus of public view. But such a box was not easy to be obtained; for, though we were perfectly convinced of our own gentility, and the gentility of our appearance, yet we found it a difficult matter to persuade the keepers of the boxes to be of our opinion: they chose to reserve genteel boxes for what they judged more genteel company.

At last, however, we were fixed, though somewhat obscurely, and supplied with the usual entertainments of the place. The widow found the supper excellent; but Mrs. Tibbs thought every thing detestable. "Come, come, my dear," cries the husband, by way of consolation, "to be sure we cannot find such dressing here as we have at Lord Crump's or Lady Crimp's; but for Vauxhall dressing it is pretty good. It is not their victuals, indeed, I find fault with, but their wine; their wine," cries he, drinking off a glass, "indeed it is most abominable."

By this last contradiction the widow was fairly

conquered in point of politeness. She perceived now, that she had no pretensions in the world to taste; her very senses were vulgar, since she had praised detestable custard, and smacked at wretched wine; she was therefore content to yield the victory, and, for the rest of the night, to listen and improve. It is true, she would now and then forget herself, and confess she was pleased; but they soon brought her back again to miserable refinement. She once praised the painting of the box in which they were sitting; but was soon convinced, that such paltry pieces ought rather to excite horror than satisfaction. She ventured again to commend one of the singers; but Mrs. Tibbs soon let her know, in the style of a connoisseur, that the singer in question had neither ear, voice, nor judgment.

Mr. Tibbs, now willing to prove that his wife's pretensions to music were just, entreated her to favour the company with a song: but to this she gave a positive denial; for you know very well, my dear," says she, "that I am not in voice to-day; and when one's voice is not equal to one's judgment, what signifies singing? Besides, as there is no accompaniment, it would be but spoiling music." All these excuses, however, were overruled by the rest of the company, who, though one would think they already had music enough, joined in the entreaty; but particularly the widow, now willing to convince the company of her breeding, pressed so warmly, that she seemed determined to take no refusal. At last, then, the lady complied; and, after humming for some minutes, began with such a voice, and such affectation, as I could perceive gave but little satisfaction to any except her husband: he sat with rapture in his eye, and beat time with his hand upon the table.

You must observe, my friend, that it is the custom of this country, when a lady or gentleman happens

to sing, for the company to sit as mute and motionless as statues. Every feature, every limb, must seem to correspond in fixed attention; and while the song continues they are to remain in a state of universal petrification. In this mortifying situation we had continued for some time, listening to the song, and looking with tranquillity, when the master of the box came to inform us that the water-works were going to begin. At this information I could instantly perceive the widow bounce from her seat; but, correcting herself, she sat down again, repressed by motives of good-breeding. Mrs. Tibbs, who had seen the water-works an hundred times, resolving not to be interrupted, continued her song without any share of mercy, nor had the smallest pity on our impatience. The widow's face, I own, gave me high entertainment; in it I could plainly read the struggle she felt between good-breeding and curiosity: she had talked of the water-works the whole evening before, and seemed to have come merely in order to see them; but then she could not bounce out in the very middle of a song, for that would be forfeiting all her professions to high life, or high-lived company, ever after. Mrs. Tibbs therefore kept on singing, and we all continued to listen, till at last, when the song was just concluded, the waiter came to inform us, that the water-works were over!

"The water-works over!" cried the widow, "The water-works over already! That's impossible; they can't be over so soon!" "It is not my business," replied the fellow, "to contradict your ladyship; I'll run again and see." He went, and soon returned with a confirmation of the dismal tidings. No ceremony could now bind my friend's disappointed mistress; she testified her displeasure in the openest manner: in short, she now began to find fault in her turn; and at last insisted upon going home, just at

the time that Mr. and Mrs. Tibbs assured the company that the polite hours were going to begin, and that the ladies would instantaneously be entertained with the horns.

Letter from Lien Chi Altangi, to Hingpo, by the way of Moscow.

AGE, that lessens the enjoyment of life, increases our desire of living. Those dangers, which, in the vigour of youth, we had learned to despise, assume new terrors as we grow old. Our caution increasing as our years increase, fear becomes at last the prevailing passion of the mind; and the small remainder of life is taken up in useless efforts to keep off our end, or provide for a continued existence.

Strange contradiction in our nature, and to which even the wise are liable! If I should judge of that part of life which lies before me, by that which I have already seen, the prospect is hideous. Experience tells me that my past enjoyments have brought me no real felicity, and sensation assures me that those I have felt are stronger than those which are yet to come. Yet experience and sensation in vain persuade: hope, more powerful than either, dresses out the distant prospect in fancied beauty, some happiness in long perspective still beckons me to pursue; and, like a losing gamester, every new disappointment increases my ardour to continue the game.

Whence, my friend, this increased love of life, which grows upon us with our years? whence comes it, that we thus make greater efforts to preserve our existence, at a period when it becomes scarce worth the keeping? Is it that nature, attentive to the preservation of mankind, increases our wishes to live, while she lessens our enjoyments: and, as she robs

the senses of every pleasure, equips imagination in the spoil? Life would be insupportable to an old man, who, loaded with infirmities, feared death no more than when in the vigour of manhood; the numberless calamities of decaying nature, and the consciousness of surviving every pleasure, would at once induce him, with his own hand, to terminate the scene of misery: but happily, the contempt of death forsakes him at a time when it could only be prejudicial, and life acquires an imaginary value, in proportion as its real value is no more.

Our attachment to every object around us increases in general from the length of our acquaintance with it. "I would not choose," says a French philosopher, "to see an old post pulled up, with which I have been long acquainted. A mind long habituated to a certain set of objects insensibly becomes fond of seeing them; visits them from habit, and parts from them with reluctance. From hence proceeds the avarice of the old in every kind of possession. They love the world, and all that it produces; they love life and all its advantages; not because it gives them pleasure, but because they have known it long.

Chinwang, the Chaste, ascending the throne of China, commanded, that all who were unjustly detained in prison during the preceding reigns should be set free. Among the number who came to thank their deliverer on this occasion, there appeared a majestic old man, who, falling at the emperor's feet, addressed him as follows: "Great father of China! behold a wretch, now eighty-five years old, who was shut up in a dungeon at the age of twenty-two. I was imprisoned, though a stranger to crime, or without being even confronted by my accusers. I have now lived in solitude and darkness for more than fifty years, and am grown familiar with distress. As yet, dazzled with the splendour of that

sun to which you have restored me, I have been wandering the street to find some friend that would assist, or relieve, or remember me ; but my friends, my family, and relations, are all dead and I am forgotten. Permit me then, O Chinwang, to wear out the wretched remains of life in my former prison. The walls of my dungeon are to me more pleasing than the most splendid palace ; I have not long to live, and shall be unhappy except I spend the rest of my days where my youth was passed, in that prison from whence you were pleased to release me."

The old man's passion for confinement is similar to that we all have for life. We are habituated to the prison, we look round with discontent, are displeased with the abode, and yet the length of our captivity only increases our fondness for the cell. The trees we have planted, the houses we have built, or the posterity we have begotten, all serve to bind us closer to earth, and embitter our parting. Life sues the young like a new acquaintance : the companion, as yet unexhausted, is at once instructive and amusing, its company pleases ; yet for all this, it is but little regarded. To us, who are declined in years, life appears like an old friend ; its jests have been anticipated in former conversation ; it has no new story to make us smile, no improvement with which to surprise, yet still we love it ; destitute of every agreement, still we love it ; husband the wasting treasure with increased frugality, and feel all the poignancy of anguish in the fatal separation.

Sir Philip Mordaunt was young, beautiful, sincere, brave, an Englishman. He had a complete fortune of his own, and the love of the king his master, which was equivalent to riches. Life opened all her treasure before him, and promised a long succession of future happiness. He came, tasted of the entertainment ; but was disgusted, even in the beginning.

He professed an aversion to living: was tired of walking round the same circle; had tried every enjoyment, and found them all grow weaker at every repetition. "If life be in youth so displeasing," cried he to himself, "what will it appear when old age comes on? If it be at present indifferent, sure it will then be execrable." This thought embittered every reflection; till, at last, with all the serenity of perverted reason, he ended the debate with a pistol! Had this self-deluded man been apprised, that existence grows more desirable to us the longer we exist, he would then have faced old age without shrinking: he would have boldly dared to live, and served that society by his future assiduity, which he basely injured by his desertion. Adieu.

Letter from Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Houm, First President of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking in China.

IN reading the newspapers here, I have reckoned up not less than twenty-five great men, seventeen very great men, and nine very extraordinary men, in less than the compass of half a year. These, say the gazettes, are the men that posterity are to gaze at with admiration; these, the names that fame will be employed in holding up for the astonishment of succeeding ages. Let me see, forty-six great men in half a year, amounts just to ninety-two in a year. I wonder how posterity will be able to remember them all, or whether the people in future times will have any other business to mind but that of getting the catalogue by heart.

Does the mayor of a corporation make a speech? he is instantly set down for a great man. Does a pedant digest his common-place book into a folio? he quickly becomes great. Does a poet string up trite sentiments in rhyme? he also becomes the great

man of the hour. How diminutive soever the object of admiration, each is followed by a crowd of still more diminutive admirers. The shout begins in his train; onward he marches towards immortality, looks back at the pursuing crowd with self-satisfaction: catching all the oddities, the whimsies, the absurdities, and the littlenesses of conscious greatness by the way.

I was yesterday invited by a gentleman to dinner, who promised that our entertainment should consist of an haunch of venison, a turtle, and a great man. I came according to appointment. The venison was fine, the turtle good, but the great man insupportable. The moment I ventured to speak, I was at once contradicted with a snap. I attempted, by a second and a third assault, to retrieve my lost reputation, but was still beat back with confusion. I was resolved to attack him once more from intrenchment, and turned the conversation upon the government of China; but even here he asserted, snapped, and contradicted as before. Heavens, thought I, this man pretends to know China even better than myself! I looked round to see who was on my side, but every eye was fixed in admiration on the great man. I therefore at last thought proper to sit silent, and act the pretty gentleman during the ensuing conversation.

When a man has once secured a circle of admirers, he may be as ridiculous here as he thinks proper, and it all passes for elevation of sentiment, or learned absence. If he transgresses the common forms of breeding, mistakes even a teapot for a tobacco-box, it is said that his thoughts are fixed on more important objects; to speak and act like the rest of mankind is to be no greater than they. There is something of oddity in the very idea of greatness, for we are seldom astonished at a thing very much resembling ourselves.

When the Tartars make a Lama, their first care is to place him in a dark corner of the temple; here he is to sit half concealed from view, to regulate the motion of his hands, lips, and eyes; but, above all, he is enjoined gravity and silence. This, however, is but the prelude to his apotheosis. A set of emissaries are dispatched among the people, to cry up his piety, gravity, and love of raw flesh; the people take them at their word, approach the Lama, now become an idol, with the most humble prostration; he receives their addresses without motion, commences a god, and is ever after fed by his priests with the spoon of immortality. The same receipt in this country serves to make a great man. The idol only keeps close, sends out his little emissaries to be hearty in his praise, and straight, whether statesman or author, he is set down in the list of fame, continuing to be praised while it is fashionable to praise, or while he prudently keeps his minuteness concealed from the public.

I have visited many countries, and have been in cities without number: yet never did I enter a town which could not produce ten or twelve of those little great men, all fancying themselves known to the rest of the world, and complimenting each other upon their extensive reputation. It is amusing enough, when two of those domestic prodigies of learning mount the stage of ceremony, and give and take praise from each other. I have been present when a German doctor, for having pronounced a panegyric upon a certain monk, was thought the most ingenious man in the world; till the monk soon after divided this reputation by returning the compliment, by which means they both marched off with universal applause.

The same degree of undeserved adulation, that attends our great man while living, often also follows him to the tomb. It frequently happens that one of

his little admirers sits down big with the important subject, and is delivered of the history of his life and writings. This may properly be called the revolutions of a life between the fire-side and the easy-chair. In this we learn the year in which he was born; at what an early age he gave symptoms of uncommon genius and application; together with some of his smart sayings, collected by his aunt and mother while yet but a boy. The next book introduces him to the university, where we are informed of his amazing progress in learning, his excellent skill in darning stockings, and his new invention for papering books, to save the covers. He next makes his appearance in the republic of letters, and publishes his folio. Now the Colossus is reared, his works are eagerly bought up by all the purchasers of scarce books. The learned societies invite him to become a member; he disputes against some foreigner with a long Latin name, conquers in the controversy, is complimented by several authors of gravity and importance, is excessively fond of egg sauce with his pig, becomes president of a literary club, and dies in the meridian of his glory. Happy they who thus have some little faithful attendant, who never forsakes them, but prepares to wrangle and to praise against every opposer; at once ready to increase their pride while living, and their character when dead. For you and I, my friend, who have no humble admirer thus to attend us, we, who neither are, nor ever will be, great men, and who do not much care whether we are great men or not, at least let us strive to be honest men, and to have common sense. Adieu.

Letter from Lien Chi Altangi, to Hingpo, by the way of Moscow.

YOU are now arrived at an age, my son, when

pleasure dissuades from application ; but rob not, by present gratification, all the succeeding period of life of its happiness. Sacrifice a little pleasure, at first, to the expectance of greater : the study of a very few years will make the rest of life completely easy.

But, instead of continuing the subject myself, take the following instructions, borrowed from a modern philosopher of China. " He who has begun his fortune by study, will certainly confirm it by perseverance. The love of books damps the passion for pleasure, and when this passion is once extinguished, life is then chiefly supported. Thus, a man being possessed of more than he wants, can never be subject to great disappointments, and avoids all those meannesses which indigence sometimes unavoidably produces.

" There is unspeakable pleasure attending the life of a voluntary student. The first time I read an excellent book, it is to me just as if I had gained a new friend. When I read over a book I have perused before, it resembles the meeting of an old one. We ought to lay hold of every incident in life for improvement, the trifling as well as the important. It is not one diamond alone which gives lustre to another ; a common coarse stone is also employed for that purpose. Thus I ought to draw advantage from the insults and contempt I meet with from a worthless fellow. His brutality ought to induce me to self-examination, and correct every blemish that may have given rise to his calumny.

" Yet, with all the pleasures and profits which are generally produced by learning, parents often find it difficult to induce their children to study. They often seem dragged to what wears the appearance of application. Thus, being dilatory in the beginning, all future hopes of eminence are en-

tirely cut off. If they find themselves obliged to write two lines more polite than ordinary, their pencil then seems as heavy as a mill-stone, and they spend ten years in turning two or three periods with propriety.

“ These persons are most at a loss when a banquet is almost over: the plate and the dice go round, that the number of little verses, which each is obliged to repeat, may be determined by chance. The booby, when it comes to his turn, appears quite stupid and insensible. The company divert themselves with his confusion, and sneers, winks, and whispers, are circulated at his expense. As for him, he opens a pair of large heavy eyes, stares at all about him, and even offers to join in the laugh, without ever considering himself as the burden of all their good-humour.

“ But it is of no importance to read much, except you be regular in your reading. If it be interrupted for any considerable time, it can never be attended with proper improvement. There are some who study for one day with intense application, and repose themselves for ten days after. But wisdom is a coquette, and must be courted with unabating assiduity.

“ It was a saying of the ancients, that a man never opens a book without reaping some advantage by it; I say, with them, that every book can serve to make us more expert, except romances, and these are no better than instruments of debauchery; they are dangerous fictions, where love is the ruling passion.

“ The most indecent strokes there, pass for turns of wit; intrigue and criminal liberties, for gallantry and politeness; assignations, and even villainy, are put in such strong lights, as may inspire even grown men with the strongest passion. How much more, therefore, ought the youth of

either sex to dread them, whose reason is so weak, and whose hearts are so susceptible of passion!

“To slip in by a back door, or leap a wall, are accomplishments that, when handsomely set off, enchant a young heart. It is true, the plot is commonly wound up by a marriage, concluded with the consent of parents, and adjusted by every ceremony prescribed by law. But as, in the body of the work, there are many passages that offend good morals, overthrow laudable customs, violate the laws, and destroy the duties most essential to society, virtue is thereby exposed to the most dangerous attacks.

“But, say some, the authors of these romances have nothing in view, but to represent vice punished, and virtue rewarded.—Granted. But will the greater number of readers take notice of these punishments and rewards? Are not their minds carried to something else? Can it be imagined, that the art with which the author inspires the love of virtue, can overcome that crowd of thoughts which sways them to licentiousness? To be able to inculcate virtue by so leaky a vehicle, the author must be a philosopher of the first rank. But, in our age, we can find but few first rate philosophers.

“Avoid such performances where vice assumes the face of virtue: seek wisdom and knowledge, without ever thinking you have found them. A man is wise while he continues in the pursuit of wisdom; but, when he once fancies that he has found the object of his inquiry, he then becomes a fool. Learn to pursue virtue from the man that is blind, who never makes a step, without first examining the ground with his staff.

“The world is like a vast sea; mankind like a vessel sailing on its tempestuous bosom. Our prudence is its sails; the senses serve us for oars;

good or bad fortune are the favourable or contrary winds; and judgment is the rudder. Without this last, the vessel is tossed by every billow, and will find shipwreck in every breeze. In a word, obscurity and indigence are the parents of vigilance and economy; vigilance and economy, of riches and honour; riches and honour, of pride and luxury; pride and luxury, of impurity and idleness, and impurity and idleness, again, produce indigence and obscurity. Such are the revolutions of life." Adieu.

Letter from Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, First President of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

I FANCY the character of a poet is in every country the same; fond of enjoying the present, careless of the future; his conversation, that of a man of sense, his actions those of a fool! Of fortitude, able to stand unmoved at the bursting of an earthquake; yet, of sensibility to be affected by the breaking of a teacup. Such is his character, which, considered in every light, is the very opposite of that which leads to riches.

The poets of the West are as remarkable for their indigence as their genius, and yet, among the numerous hospitals designed to relieve the poor, I have heard of but one erected for the benefit of decaying authors. This was founded by Pope Urban VIII, and called the retreat of the incurables; intimating, that it was equally impossible to reclaim the patients, who sued for reception, from poverty or from poetry. To be sincere, were I to send you an account of the lives of the western poets, either ancient or modern, I fancy you would think me employed in collecting materials for an history of human wretchedness.

Homer is the first poet and beggar of note among the ancients: he was blind, and sung his ballads about the streets. But it is observed, that his mouth was more frequently filled with verses than with bread. Plautus, the comic poet, was better off, he had two trades; he was a poet for his diversion, and helped to turn a mill, in order to gain a livelihood. Terence was a slave; and Boethius died in a jail.

Among the Italians, Paulo Burghese, almost as good a poet as Tasso, knew fourteen different trades; and yet died because he could get employment in none. Tasso himself, who had the most amiable character of all poets, has often been obliged to borrow a crown from some friend, in order to pay for a month's subsistence: He has left us a pretty sonnet, addressed to his cat; in which he begs the light of her eyes to write by, being too poor to afford himself a candle. But Bentivoglio, poor Bentivoglio! chiefly demands our pity. His comedies will last with the Italian language: he dissipated a noble fortune in acts of charity and benevolence; but, falling into misery in his old age, was refused to be admitted into an hospital which he himself had erected.

In Spain, it is said, the great Cervantes died of hunger; and it is certain that the famous Camoens ended his days in an hospital.

If we turn to France, we shall there find even stronger instances of the ingratitude of the public. Vauvelas, one of the politest writers, and one of the honestest men of his time, was surnamed the *Owl*, from his being obliged to keep within all day, and venture out only by night, through fear of his creditors. His last will is very remarkable. After having bequeathed all his worldly substance to the discharging of his debts, he goes on thus: "But as

there still may remain some creditors unpaid, even after all that I have shall be disposed of; in such a case, it is my last will, that my body shall be sold to the surgeons to the best advantage, and that the purchase shall go to the discharging those debts which I owe to society; so that if I could not, while living, at least when dead, I may be useful."

Cassander was one of the greatest geniuses of his time; yet all his merit could not procure him a bare subsistence. Being, by degrees, driven into an hatred of all mankind, from the little pity he found amongst them, he even ventured, at last, ungratefully, to impute his calamities to Providence. In his last agonies, when the priest entreated him to rely on the justice of Heaven, and ask mercy from him that made him; "If God," replies he, "has shown me no justice here, what reason have I to expect any from him hereafter?" But being answered, that a suspension of justice was no argument that should induce us to doubt of its reality; "Let me entreat you," continued his confessor, "by all that is dear, to be reconciled to God your father, your maker, and friend." "No," replied the exasperated wretch, "you know the manner in which he left me to live, and," pointing to the straw on which he was stretched, "you see the manner in which he leaves me to die."

But the sufferings of the poet, in other countries, are nothing when compared to his distresses here. The names of Spenser and Otway, Butler and Dryden, are every day mentioned as a national reproach; some of them lived in a state of precarious indigence, and others literally died of hunger.

At present, the few poets of England no longer depend on the great for subsistence; they have now no other patrons but the public; and the public, collectively considered, is a good and generous master. It is indeed too frequently mistaken as to the

merits of every candidate for favour; but to make amends, it is never mistaken long. A performance, indeed, may be forced, for a time, into reputation; but, destitute of real merit, it soon sinks. Time, the touchstone of what is truly valuable, will soon discover the fraud: and an author should never arrogate to himself any share of success, till his works have been read at least ten years with satisfaction.

A man of letters at present, whose works are valuable, is perfectly sensible of their value. Every polite member of the community, by buying what he writes, contributes to reward him. The ridicule, therefore, of living in a garret, might have been wit in the last age, but continues such no longer, because no longer true. A writer of real merit now may easily be rich, if his heart be set only on fortune! and for those who have no merit, it is but fit that such should remain in merited obscurity. He may now refuse an invitation to dinner, without fearing to incur his patron's displeasure, or to starve by remaining at home. He may now venture to appear in company with just such clothes as other men generally wear, and talk even to princes, with all the conscious superiority of wisdom. Though he cannot boast of fortune here, yet he can bravely assert the dignity of independence. Adieu.

Letter from the same.

IT is no displeasing contemplation, to consider the influence which soil and climate have upon the disposition of the inhabitants, the animals, and vegetables of different countries. That among the brute creation is much more visible than in man; and that in vegetables more than either. In some places, those plants, which are entirely poisonous at home, lose their deleterious quality by being carried

abroad. There are serpents in Macedonia so harmless as to be used as playthings for children; and we are told, that, in some parts of Fez, there are lions so very timorous as to be scared away, though coming in herds, by the cries of women.

I know of no country where the influence of climate and soil is more visible than in England. The same hidden cause which gives courage to their dogs and cocks, gives also fierceness to their men. But chiefly, this ferocity appears among the vulgar. The polite of every country pretty nearly resemble each other. But, as in simplifying, it is among the uncultivated productions of nature we are to examine the characteristic differences of climate and soil: so, in an estimate of the genius of the people, we must look among the sons of unpolished rusticity. The vulgar English, therefore, may be easily distinguished from all the rest of the world by superior pride, impatience, and a peculiar hardness of soul.

Perhaps no qualities in the world are more susceptible of a fine polish than these. Artificial complaisance and easy deference, being superinduced over these, generally form a greater character; something at once elegant and majestic, affable yet sincere. Such, in general, are the better sort; but they who are left in primitive rudeness are the least disposed for society with others, or comfort internally, of any people under the sun.

The poor, indeed, of every country, are but little prone to treat each other with tenderness; their own miseries are too apt to engross all their pity; and perhaps, too, they give but little commiseration, as they find but little from others. But, in England, the poor treat each other, upon every occasion, with more than savage animosity, and as if they were in a state of open war by nature. In China, if two porters should meet in a narrow street, they would

lay down their burdens, make a thousand excuses to each other for the accidental interruption, and beg pardon on their knees. If two men of the same occupation should meet here, they would first begin to scold, and at last to beat each other. One would think they had miseries enow resulting from penury and labour, not to increase them by ill-nature among themselves, and subjection to new penalties: but such considerations never weigh with them.

But, to recompense this strange absurdity, they are in the main, generous, brave, and enterprising. They feel the slightest injuries with a degree of ungoverned impatience, but resist the greatest calamities with surprising fortitude. Those miseries under which any other people in the world would sink, they have often showed they were capable of enduring. If accidentally cast upon some desolate coast, their perseverance is beyond what any other nation is capable of sustaining. If imprisoned for crimes, their efforts to escape are greater than among others. The peculiar strength of their prisons, when compared to those elsewhere, argues their hardness. Even the strongest prisons I have ever seen, in other countries, would be very insufficient to confine the untameable spirit of an Englishman. In short, what man dares do in circumstances of danger, an Englishman will. His virtues seem to sleep in the calm, and are called out only to combat the kindred storm.

But the greatest eulogy of this people is the generosity of their miscreants; the tenderness, in general, of their robbers and highwaymen. Perhaps no people can produce instances of the same kind, where the desperate mix pity with injustice; still showing that they understand a distinction in crimes; and even in acts of violence have still some tincture of remaining virtue. In every other country, robbery and murder go always together; here it seldom happens, except upon ill-judged re-

sistance or pursuit. The banditti of other countries are unmerciful to a supreme degree. The highwayman and robber here are generous, at least to the public; and pretend even to virtues in their intercourse among each other. Taking, therefore, my opinion of the English, from the virtues and vices practised among the vulgar, they at once present to a stranger all their faults, and keep their virtues up only for the inquiring eye of a philosopher.

Foreigners are generally shocked at their insolence, upon first coming among them. They find themselves ridiculed and insulted in every street. They meet with none of those trifling civilities, so frequent elsewhere, which are instances of mutual good-will, without previous acquaintance. They travel through the country, either too ignorant, or too obstinate, to cultivate a closer acquaintance; meet, every moment, something to excite their disgust, and return home to characterize this as the region of spleen, insolence, and ill-nature. In short, England would be the last place in the world I would travel to by way of amusement; but the first for instruction. I would choose to have others for my acquaintance, but Englishmen for my friends.

Letter from the same.

IT is the most usual method, in every report, first to examine its probability, and then act as the conjuncture may require. The English, however, exert a different spirit in such circumstances: they first act, and when too late begin to examine. From a knowledge of this disposition, there are several here who make it their business to frame new reports at every convenient interval, all tending to denounce ruin both on their contemporaries and their posterity.

This denunciation is eagerly caught up by the public; away they fling to propagate the distress: sell out at one place, buy in at another; grumble at their governors, shout in mobs, and, when they have thus for some time behaved like fools, sit down coolly to argue and talk wisdom, to puzzle each other with syllogism, and prepare for the report that prevails, which is always attended with the same success.

Thus they are ever rising above one report only to sink into another. They resemble a dog in a well, pawing to get free. When he has raised his upper parts above water, and every spectator imagines him disengaged, his lower parts drag him down again, and sink him to the nose: he makes new efforts to emerge, and every effort increasing his weakness only tends to sink him the deeper.

There are some here who, I am told, make a tolerable subsistence by the credulity of their countrymen. As they find the public fond of blood, wounds, and death, they contrive political ruins suited to every month in the year. This month, the people are to be eaten up by the French in flat-bottomed boats; the next, by the soldiers designed to beat the French back. Now, the people are going to jump down the gulf of luxury; and now nothing but an herring-subscription can fish them up again. Time passes on; the report proves false; new circumstances produce new changes. But the people never change: they are persevering in folly.

In other countries, those boding politicians would be left to fret over their own schemes alone, and grow splenetic without hopes of infecting others; but England seems to be the very region where spleen delights to dwell: a man not only can give an unbounded scope to the disorder in himself, but may, if he pleases, propagate it over the whole kingdom.

with a certainty of success. He has only to cry out, that the government, the government, is all wrong; that their schemes are leading to ruin; that Britons are no more. Every good member of the commonwealth thinks it his duty, in such a case, to deplore the universal decadence with sympathetic sorrow, and by fancying the constitution in a decay, absolutely to impair its vigour.

This people would laugh at my simplicity, should I advise them to be less sanguine in harbouring gloomy predictions, and examine coolly before they attempted to complain. I have just heard a story, which, though transacted in a private family, serves very well to describe the behaviour of the whole nation in cases of threatened calamity. As there are public, so there are private incendiaries here. One of the last, either for the amusement of his friends, or to divert a fit of the spleen, lately sent a threatening letter to a worthy family in my neighbourhood to this effect:—

“ Sir, Knowing you to be very rich, and finding myself to be very poor, I think proper to inform you, that I have learned the secret of poisoning man, woman, and child, without danger of detection. Don’t be uneasy, Sir, you may take your choice of being poisoned in a fortnight, or poisoned in a month, or poisoned in six weeks; you shall have full time to settle all your affairs. Though I am poor, I love to do things like a gentleman. But, Sir, you must die. I have determined it within my breast, that you must die. Blood, Sir, blood is my trade; so I could wish you would, this day six weeks, take leave of your friends, wife, and family, for I cannot possibly allow you longer time. To convince you more certainly of the power of my art, by which you may know I speak truth, take this letter, when you have read it, tear off the seal, fold it up, and give it to your favourite Dutch mastiff that sits by the fire; he

will swallow it, Sir, like a buttered toast: in three hours and four minutes after he has taken it, he will attempt to bite off his own tongue, and, half an hour after, burst asunder in twenty pieces. Blood, blood, blood! So no more at present from, Sir, your most obedient, most devoted humble servant to command, till death."

You may easily imagine the consternation into which this letter threw the whole good-natured family. The poor man, to whom it was addressed, was the more surprised, as not knowing how he could merit such inveterate malice. All the friends of the family were convened. It was universally agreed, that it was a most terrible affair, and that the government should be solicited to offer a reward and a pardon: a fellow of this kind would go on poisoning family after family, and it was impossible to say where the destruction would end. In pursuance of these determinations, the government was applied to, strict search was made after the incendiary, but all in vain. At last, therefore, they recollected that the experiment was not yet tried upon the dog; the Dutch mastiff was brought up, and placed in the midst of the friends and relations, the seal was torn off, the packet folded up with care; and soon they found, to the great surprise of all—the dog would not eat the letter. Adieu.

Letter from the same.

IT is surprising what an influence titles shall have upon the mind, even though these titles be of our own making. Like children, we dress up the puppets in finery, and then stand in astonishment at the plastic wonder. I have been told of a rat-catcher here, who strolled for a long time about the villages near town, without finding any employ-

ment. At last, however, he thought proper to take the title of his Majesty's Rat-catcher in Ordinary, and this succeeded beyond his expectations; when it was known that he caught rats at court, all were ready to give him countenance and employment.

But, of all the people, they who make books seem most perfectly sensible of the advantage of titular dignity. All seem convinced, that a book written by vulgar hands can neither instruct nor improve; none but kings, chams, and mandarines, can write with any probability of success. If the titles inform me right, not only kings and courtiers, but emperors themselves, in this country, periodically supply the press.

A man here, who should write and honestly confess that he wrote for bread, might as well send his manuscript to fire the baker's oven; not one creature will read them; all must be court bred poets, or pretend at least to be court bred, who can expect to please. Should the caitiff fairly avow a design of emptying our pockets, and filling his own, every reader would instantly forsake him; even those who write for bread themselves would combine to worry him, perfectly sensible that his attempts only served to take the bread out of their mouths.

And yet this silly prepossession the more amazes me, when I consider, that almost all the excellent productions in wit that have appeared here were purely the offspring of necessity: their Drydens, Butlers, Otways, and Farquhars, were all writers for bread. Believe me, my friend, hunger has a most amazing faculty for sharpening the genius; and he who, with a full belly, can think like a hero, after a course of fasting shall rise to the sublimity of a demigod.

But what will most amaze is, that this very set

of men, who are now so much depreciated by fools, are, however, the very best writers they have among them at present. For my own part, were I to buy an hat, I would not have it from a stocking maker, but an hatter; were I to buy shoes, I should not go to the tailor's for that purpose. It is just so with regard to wit: did I, for my life, desire to be well served, I would apply only to those who made it their trade, and lived by it. You smile at the oddity of my opinion. But be assured, my friend, that wit is, in some measure, mechanical; and that a man long habituated to catch at even its resemblance will at last be happy enough to possess the substance. By a long habit of writing he acquires a justness of thinking, and a mastery of manner, which holiday writers, even with ten times his genius, may vainly attempt to equal.

How, then, are they deceived, who expect from title, dignity, and exterior circumstance, an excellence, which is in some measure acquired by habit, and sharpened by necessity? You have seen, like me, many literary reputations promoted by the influence of fashion, which have scarce survived the possessor: you have seen the poor hardly earn the little reputation they acquired, and their merit only acknowledged when they were incapable of enjoying the pleasures of popularity. Such, however, is the reputation worth possessing: that which is hardly earned is hardly lost. Adieu.

Letter from Lien Chi Altangi, to Hingpo, by the way of Moscow.

FEW virtues have been more praised by moralists than generosity. Every practical treatise of ethics

tends to increase our sensibility of the distresses of others, and to relax the grasp of frugality. Philosophers that are poor praise it, because they are gainers by its effects; and the opulent Seneca himself has written a treatise on benefits, though he was known to give nothing away.

But, among the many who have enforced the duty of giving, I am surprised there are none to inculcate the ignominy of receiving; to show that, by every favour we accept, we in some measure forfeit our native freedom; and that a state of continual dependence on the generosity of others is a life of gradual debasement.

Were men taught to despise the receiving obligations with the same force of reasoning and declamation that they are instructed to confer them, we might then see every person in society filling up the requisite duties of his station with cheerful industry, neither relaxed by hope, nor sullen from disappointment.

Every favour a man receives in some measure sinks him below his dignity, and, in proportion to the value of the benefit, or the frequency of its acceptance, he gives up so much of his natural independence. He, therefore, who thrives upon the unmerited bounty of another, if he has any sensibility, suffers the worst of servitude; the shackled slave may murmur without reproach, but the humble dependent is taxed with ingratitude upon every symptom of discontent; the one may rave round the walls of his cell, but the other lingers in all the silence of mental confinement. To increase his distress, every new obligation but adds to the former load, which kept the vigorous mind from rising; till, at last, elastic no longer, it shapes itself to constraint, and puts on habitual servility.

It is thus with a feeling mind: but there are

some who, born without any share of sensibility, receive favour after favour, and still cringe for more; who accept the offer of generosity with as little reluctance as the wages of merit, and even make thanks for past benefits an indirect petition for new: such, I grant, can suffer no debasement from dependence, since they were originally as vile as was possible to be: dependence degrades only the ingenuous, but leaves the sordid mind in pristine meanness. In this manner, therefore, long continued generosity is misplaced, or it is injurious; it either finds a man worthless, or it makes him so; and true it is, that the person, who is contented to be often obliged, ought not to have been obliged at all.

Yet, while I describe the meanness of a life of continued dependence, I would not be thought to include those natural or political subordinations which subsist in every society; for, in such, though dependence is exacted from the inferior, yet the obligation on either side is mutual. The son must rely upon his parent for support: but the parent lies under the same obligations to give that the other has to expect. The subordinate officer must receive the commands of his superior; but, for this obedience, the former has a right to demand an intercourse of favour. Such is not the dependence I would depreciate, but that where every expected favour must be the result of mere benevolence in the giver; where the benefit can be kept without remorse, or transferred without injustice. The character of legacy hunter, for instance, is detestable in some countries, and despicable in all. This universal contempt of a man, who infringes upon none of the laws of society, some moralists have arraigned as a popular and unjust prejudice; never considering the necessary degradations a wretch must undergo, who previously expects to grow rich by benefits,

without having either natural or social claims to enforce his petitions.

But this intercourse of benefaction and acknowledgment is often injurious, even to the giver as well as the receiver. A man can gain but little knowledge of himself, or of the world, amidst a circle of those whom hope or gratitude has gathered around him: their unceasing humiliations must necessarily increase his comparative magnitude; for all men measure their own abilities by those of their company. Thus being taught to overrate his merit, he, in reality, lessens it; increasing in confidence, but not in power, his professions end in empty boast, his undertakings in shameful disappointment.

It is, perhaps, one of the severest misfortunes of the great, that they are in general obliged to live among men whose real value is lessened by dependence, and whose minds are enslaved by obligation.

The humble companion may have at first accepted patronage with generous views; but soon he feels the mortifying influence of conscious inferiority, by degrees sinks into a flatterer, and from flattery at last degenerates into stupid veneration. To remedy this, the great often dismiss their old dependants, and take new. Such changes are falsely imputed to levity, falsehood, or caprice, in the patron, since they may be more justly ascribed to the client's gradual deterioration.

No, my son, a life of independence is generally a life of virtue. It is that which fits the soul for every generous flight of humanity, freedom, and friendship. To give should be our pleasure, but to receive our shame. Serenity, health, and affluence attend the desire of rising by labour; misery, repentance, and disrespect, that of succeeding by extorted benevolence. The man who can thank

himself alone for the happiness he enjoys is truly blest; and lovely, far more lovely, the sturdy gloom of laborious indigence, than the fawning simper of thriving adulation. Adieu.

Letter from the same.

ONE of the principal tasks I had proposed to myself, on my arrival here, was to become acquainted with the names and characters of those now living, who, as scholars or wits, had acquired the greatest share of reputation. In order to succeed in this design, I fancied the surest method would be to begin my inquiry among the ignorant, judging that his fame would be greatest which was loud enough to be heard by the vulgar. Thus predisposed, I began the search, but only went in quest of disappointment and perplexity. I found every district had a peculiar famous man of its own. Here the story-telling shoemaker had engrossed the admiration on one side of the street, while the bellman, who excelleth at a catch, was in quiet possession of the other. At one end of a lane the sexton was regarded as the greatest man alive; but I had not travelled half its length till I found an enthusiastic teacher had divided his reputation. My landlady, perceiving my design, was kind enough to offer me her advice in this affair. It was true, she observed, that she was no judge, but she knew what pleased herself, and, if I would rest upon her judgment, I should set down Tom Collins as the most ingenious man in the world, for Tom was able to take off all mankind, and imitate, besides, a sow and pigs to perfection.

I now perceived, that taking my standard of reputation among the vulgar would swell my catalogue of great names above the size of a court

calendar: I therefore discontinued this method of pursuit, and resolved to prosecute my inquiry in that usual residence of fame, a bookseller's shop. In consequence of this, I entreated the bookseller to let me know who were they who now made the greatest figure, either in morals, wit, or learning. Without giving me a direct answer, he pulled out a pamphlet from the shelf, *The Young Attorney's Guide*: "There, Sir," cries he, "there's a touch for you; fifteen hundred of these moved off in a day: I take the author of this pamphlet, either for title, preface, plan, body, or index, to be the completest hand in England." I found it was vain to prosecute my inquiry, where my informer appeared so incompetent a judge of merit; so, paying for the *Young Attorney's Guide*, which good manners obliged me to buy, I walked off.

My pursuit after famous men now brought me into a print shop. Here, thought I, the painter only reflects the public voice. As every man who deserved it had formerly his statue placed up in the Roman forum; so here, probably, the picture of none but such as merit a place in our affections are held up for public sale. But guess my surprise, when I came to examine this depository of noted faces; all distinctions were levelled here as in the grave, and I could not but regard it as the catacomb of real merit. The brickdustman took up as much room as the truncheoned hero, and the judge was elbowed by the thief-taker; quacks, pimps, and buffoons, increased the group, and noted stallions only made room for more noted whores. I had heard the works of some of the moderns, previous to my coming to England, with delight and approbation, but I found their faces had no place here; the walls were covered with the names of authors I had never known, or had endeavoured to forget, with the little self-advertising things of a day, who

had forced themselves into fashion, but not into fame. I could read at the bottom of some pictures the names of **, and ***, and ****, all equally candidates for the vulgar shout, and foremost to propagate their unblushing faces upon brass. My uneasiness, therefore, at not finding my new favourite names among the number, was now changed into congratulation. I could not avoid reflecting on the fine observation of Tacitus on a similar occasion. "In this cavalcade of flattery," cries the historian, "neither the pictures of Brutus, Cassius, nor Cato, were to be seen; *eo clariores qui imagines eorum non deferebantur*; their absence being the strongest proof of their merit."

It is in vain, cried I, to seek for true greatness among these monuments of the unburied dead; let me go among the tombs of those who were confessedly famous, and see if any have been lately deposited there who deserve the attention of posterity, and whose names may be transmitted to my distant friend, as an honour to the present age. Determined in my pursuit, I paid a second visit to Westminster Abbey. There I found several new monuments erected to the memory of several great men. The names of the great men I absolutely forget; but I well remember that Roubillac was the statuary who carved them. I could not help smiling at two modern epitaphs in particular; one of which praised the deceased for being *ortus ex antiqua stirpe*; the other commended the dead because *hanc ædem suis sumptibus reedificavit*. The greatest merit of the one consisted in his being descended from an illustrious house; the chief distinction of the other, that he had propped up an old house that was falling. Alas, alas! cried I, such monuments as these confer honour, not upon the great men, but upon little Roubillac.

Hitherto disappointed in my inquiry after the

great of the present age, I was resolved to mix in company, and try what I could learn among critics in coffee houses; and here it was that I heard my favourite names talked of even with inverted fame. A gentleman of exalted merit, as a writer, was branded in general terms as a bad man; another, of exquisite delicacy as a poet, was reproached for wanting good-nature; a third was accused of free-thinking; and a fourth of having once been a player. Strange, cried I, how unjust are mankind in the distribution of fame! The ignorant, among whom I sought at first, were willing to grant, but incapable of distinguishing, the virtues of those who deserved it; among those I now converse with, they know the proper objects of admiration, but mix envy with applause.

Disappointed so often, I was now resolved to examine those characters in person, of whom the world talked so freely. By conversing with men of real merit, I began to find out those characters which really deserved, though they strove to avoid applause. I found the vulgar admiration entirely misplaced, and malevolence without its sting. The truly great, possessed of numerous small faults and shining virtues, preserve a sublime in morals, as in writing. They who have attained an excellence, in either, commit numberless transgressions, observable to the meanest understanding. The ignorant critic and dull remarker can readily spy blemishes in eloquence and morals, whose sentiments are not sufficiently elevated to observe a beauty. But such are judges neither of books nor of life: they can diminish no solid reputation by their censure, nor bestow a lasting character by their applause. In short, I found by my search, that such only can confer real fame upon others, who have merit themselves to deserve it. Adieu.

Letter from the same.

MANKIND have ever been prone to expatiate in the praise of human nature. The dignity of man is a subject that has always been the favourite theme of humanity. They have declaimed with that ostentation which usually accompanies such as are sure of having a partial audience; they have obtained victories, because there were none to oppose. Yet, from all I have ever read or seen, men appear more apt to err by having too high, than by having too despicable an opinion of their nature: and by attempting to exalt their original place in the creation, depress their real value in society.

The most ignorant nations have always been found to think most highly of themselves. The Deity has ever been thought peculiarly concerned in their glory and preservation: to have fought their battles, and inspired their teachers: their wizards are said to be familiar with heaven; and every hero has a guard of angels, as well as men, to attend him. When the Portuguese first came among the wretched inhabitants of the coast of Africa, these savage nations readily allowed the strangers more skill in navigation and war: yet still considered them, at best, but as useful servants, brought to their coast by their guardian serpent, to supply them with luxuries they could have lived without. Though they could grant the Portuguese more riches, they could never allow them to have such a king as their Totimondelem, who wore a bracelet of shells round his neck, and whose legs were covered with ivory.

In this manner examine a savage in the history of his country and predecessors, you ever find his warriors able to conquer armies, and his sages acquainted with more than possible knowledge. Human nature is to him an unknown country: he

thinks it capable of great things, because he is ignorant of its boundaries. Whatever can be conceived to be done, he allows to be possible; and whatever is possible, he conjectures must have been done. He never measures the actions and powers of others by what himself is able to perform, nor makes a proper estimate of the greatness of his fellows, by bringing it to the standard of his own incapacity. He is satisfied to be one of a country where mighty things have been; and imagines the fancied power of others reflects a lustre on himself. Thus, by degrees, he loses the idea of his own insignificance, in a confused notion of the extraordinary powers of humanity, and is willing to grant extraordinary gifts to every pretender, because unacquainted with their claims.

This is the reason why demigods and heroes have ever been erected in times, or countries, of ignorance and barbarity: they addressed a people who had high opinions of human nature, because they were ignorant how far it could extend: they addressed a people who were willing to allow that men should be gods, because they were yet imperfectly acquainted with God and with man. These impostors know that all men are naturally fond of seeing something very great made from the little materials of humanity; that ignorant nations are not more proud of building a tower to reach to heaven, or a pyramid to last for ages, than of raising up a demigod of their own country and creation. The same pride that erects a colossus or a pyramid, instals a god or an hero. But though the adoring savage can raise his colossus to the clouds, he can exalt the hero not one inch above the standard of humanity. Incapable, therefore, of exalting the idol, he debases himself, and falls prostrate before him.

When man thus has acquired an erroneous idea

of the dignity of his species, he and the gods become perfectly intimate. Men are but angels, angels are but men, nay, but servants that stand in waiting to execute human commands. The Persians, for instance, thus address their prophet Hally: "I salute thee, glorious creator, of whom the sun is but the shadow. Masterpiece of the Lord of human creatures, great star of justice and religion. The sea is not rich and liberal, but by the gifts of thy munificent hands. The angel treasurer of heaven reaps his harvest in the fertile gardens of the purity of thy nature. The primum mobile would never dart the ball of the sun through the trunk of heaven were it not to serve the morning, out of the extreme love she has for thee. The angel Gabriel, messenger of truth, every day kisses the groundsel of thy gate. Were there a place more exalted than the most high throne of God, I would affirm it to be thy place, O master of the faithful! Gabriel, with all his art and knowledge, is but a mere scholar to thee." Thus, my friend, men think proper to treat angels. But if, indeed, there be such an order of beings, with what a degree of satirical contempt must they listen to the songs of little mortals thus flattering each other! thus to see creatures, wiser indeed than the monkey, and more active than the oyster, claiming to themselves the mastery of heaven! minims, the tenants of an atom, thus arrogating a partnership in the creation of universal nature! Sure heaven is kind, that launches no thunder at those guilty heads: but it is kind, and regards their follies with pity, nor will destroy creatures that it loved into being.

But, whatever success this practice of making demigods might have been attended with in barbarous nations, I do not know that any man became a god in a country where the inhabitants were refined. Such countries generally have too close an inspec-

tion into human weakness to think it invested with celestial power. They sometimes, indeed, admit the gods of strangers, or of their ancestors, which had their existence in times of obscurity; their weakness being forgotten, while nothing but their power and their miracles were remembered. The Chinese, for instance, never had a god of their own country: the idols, which the vulgar worship at this day, were brought from the barbarous nations around them. The Roman emperors, who pretended to divinity, were generally taught by a poignard that they were mortal; and Alexander, though he passed among barbarous countries for a real god, could never persuade his polite countrymen into a similitude of thinking. The Lacedæmonians shrewdly complied with his commands by the following sarcastic edict:—

Εἰ Ἀλεξάνδρος βεληται εἶναι Θεός, Θεός εἶω.

Adieu.

Letter from the same.

THE misfortunes of the great, my friend, are held up to engage our attention, are enlarged upon in tones of declamation, and the world is called upon to gaze at the noble sufferers; they have at once the comfort of admiration and pity.

Yet, where is the magnanimity of bearing misfortunes when the whole world is looking on? Men in such circumstances can act bravely, even from motives of vanity. He only, who, in the vale of obscurity, can brave adversity, who, without friends to encourage, acquaintances to pity, or even without hope to alleviate his distresses, can behave with tranquillity and indifference, is truly great: whether peasant or courtier he deserves admiration, and should be held up for our imitation and respect.

The miseries of the poor are, however, entirely disregarded, though some undergo more real hardships in one day than the great in their whole lives. It is indeed inconceivable what difficulties the meanest English sailor or soldier endures without murmuring or regret. Every day to him is a day of misery, and yet he bears his hard fate without repining.

With what indignation do I hear the heroes of tragedy complain of misfortunes and hardships, whose greatest calamity is founded in arrogance and pride ! Their severest distresses are pleasures compared to what many of the adventuring poor every day sustain without murmuring. These may eat, drink, and sleep ; have slaves to attend them, and are sure of subsistence for life : while many of their fellow-creatures are obliged to wander, without a friend to comfort or assist them ; find enmity in every law, and are too poor to obtain even justice.

I have been led into these reflections from accidentally meeting, some days ago, a poor fellow begging at one of the outlets of this town, with a wooden leg. I was curious to learn what had reduced him to his present situation ; and, after giving him what I thought proper, desired to know the history of his life and misfortunes, and the manner in which he was reduced to his present distress. The disabled soldier, for such he was, with an intrepidity truly British, leaning on his crutch, put himself into an attitude to comply with my request, and gave me his history, as follows : —

“ As for misfortunes, Sir, I can’t pretend to have gone through more than others. Except the loss of my limb, and my being obliged to beg, I don’t know any reason, thank Heaven, that I have to complain. There are some, who have lost both legs

and an eye ; but, thank Heaven, it is not quite so bad with me

“ My father was a labourer in the country, and died when I was five years old : so I was put upon the parish. As he had been a wandering sort of a man, the parishioners were not able to tell to what parish I belonged, or where I was born ; so they sent me to another parish, and that parish sent me to a third ; till at last it was thought I belonged to no parish at all. At length, however, they fixed me. I had some disposition to be a scholar, and had actually learned my letters ; but the master of the workhouse put me to business as soon as I was able to handle a mallet.

“ Here I lived an easy kind of life for five years. I only wrought ten hours in the day, and had my meat and drink provided for my labour. It is true I was not suffered to stir far from the house, for fear I should run away ; but what of tha ? I had the liberty of the whole house, and the yard before the door, and that was enough for me.

“ I was next bound out to a farmer, where I was up both early and late ; but I eat and drank well, and liked my business well enough till he died. Being then obliged to provide for myself, I was resolved to go and seek my fortune. Thus I lived, and went from town to town, working when I could get employment, and starving when I could get none ; and might have lived so still, but, happening one day to go through a field belonging to a magistrate, I spied a hare crossing the path just before me. I believe the devil put it into my head to fling my stick at it. Well, what will you have on't ? I killed the hare, and was bringing it away in triumph, when the justice himself met me : he called me a villain ; and, collaring me, desired I would give an account of myself. I began immediately to give a full account of all that I knew of my breed, seed,

and generation : but, though I gave a very long account, the justice said I could give no account of myself ; so I was indicted and found guilty of being poor, and sent to Newgate, in order to be transported to the plantations.

“ People may say this and that of being in gaol ; but, for my part, I found Newgate as agreeable a place as ever I was in, in all my life. I had my bellyful to eat and drink, and did no work : but alas ! this kind of life was too good to last for ever. I was taken out of prison after five months ; put on board of a ship, and sent off with two hundred more. Our passage was but indifferent, for we were all confined in the hold, and died very fast for want of sweet air and provisions : but, for my part, I did not want meat, because I had a fever all the way. Providence was kind ; when provisions grew short, it took away my desire of eating. When we came ashore we were sold to the planters. I was bound for seven years ; and as I was no scholar, for I had forgotten my letters, I was obliged to work among the Negroes, and served out my time as in duty bound to do.

“ When my time was expired, I worked my passage home ; and glad was I to see Old England again, because I loved my country. O liberty ! liberty ! liberty ! that is the property of every Englishman, and I will die in its defence ! I was afraid, however, that I should be indicted for a vagabond once more ; so I did not much care to go into the country, but kept about town, and did little jobs when I could get them. I was very happy in this manner for some time ; till one evening, coming home from work, two men knocked me down, and then desired me to stand still. They belonged to a press-gang. I was carried before the justice ; and as I could give no account of myself (that was the thing that always hobbled me), I had my choice left,

whether to go on board a man of war, or list for a soldier: I chose to be a soldier; and in this post of a gentleman I served two campaigns, was at the battles in Flanders, and received but one wound through the breast, which is troublesome to this day.

“When the peace came on I was discharged; and as I could not work, because my wound was sometimes painful, I listed for a landman in the East India Company’s service. I here fought the French in six pitched battles; and verily believe, that, if I could read or write, our captain would have given me promotion, and made me a corporal. But that was not my good fortune. I soon fell sick; and, when I became good for nothing, got leave to return home again, with forty pounds in my pocket, which I saved in the service. This was at the beginning of the present war; so I hoped to be set on shore, and to have the pleasure of spending my money; but the government wanted men, and I was pressed again, before ever I could set foot on shore.

“The boatswain found me, as he said, an obstinate fellow. He swore that I understood my business perfectly well; but that I pretended sickness merely to be idle. God knows I knew nothing of sea business. He beat me, without considering what he was about. But still my forty pounds was some comfort to me under every beating. The money was my comfort, and the money I might have had to this day, but that our ship was taken by the French, and so I lost it all!

“Our crew was carried into a French prison, and many of them died, because they were not used to live in gaol; but, for my part, it was nothing to me, for I was seasoned. One night, however, as I was sleeping on a bed of boards, with a warm blanket about me (for I always loved to lie well), I was awaked by the boatswain, who had a dark lantern

in his hand. "Jack," says he to me, "will you knock out the French sentry's brains?" "I don't care," says I, striving to keep myself awake, "if I lend a hand." "Then follow me," says he, "and I hope we shall do business." So up I got, and tied my blanket, which was all the clothes I had, about my middle, and went with him to fight the Frenchmen. We had no arms; but one Englishman is able to beat five Frenchmen at any time; so we went down to the door, where both the sentries were posted, and, rushing upon them, seized their arms in a moment, and knocked them down. From thence nine of us ran together to the quay; and, seizing the first boat we met, got out of the harbour, and put to sea. We had not been here three days before we were taken up by an English privateer, who was glad of so many good hands, and we consented to run our chance. However, we had not so much luck as we expected. In three days we fell in with a French man of war of forty guns, while we had but twenty-three; so to it we went. The fight lasted for three hours, and I verily believe we should have taken the Frenchman, but, unfortunately, we lost almost all our men, just as we were going to get the victory. I was once more in the power of the French; and I believe it would have gone hard with me had I been brought back to my old gaol in Brest; but, by good fortune, we were retaken, and carried to England once more.

"I had almost forgot to tell you, that, in this last engagement, I was wounded in two places, I lost four fingers of my left hand, and my leg was shot off. Had I had the good fortune to have lost my leg and the use of my hand on board a king's ship, and not a privateer, I should have been entitled to clothing and maintenance during the rest of my life; but that was not my chance; one man is born with a silver spoon in his mouth, and another with a wooden

ladle. However, blessed be God, I enjoy good health; and have no enemy in this world, that I know of, but the French and the justice of peace."

Thus saying, he limped off, leaving my friend and me in admiration of his intrepidity and content: nor could we avoid acknowledging, that an habitual acquaintance with misery is the truest school of fortitude and philosophy. Adieu.

Letter from the same.

WHENEVER I attempt to characterise the English in general, some unforeseen difficulties constantly occur to disconcert my design; I hesitate between censure and praise. When I consider them as a reasoning, philosophical people, they have my applause; but, when I reverse the medal, and observe their inconstancy and irresolution, I can scarcely persuade myself that I am observing the same people.

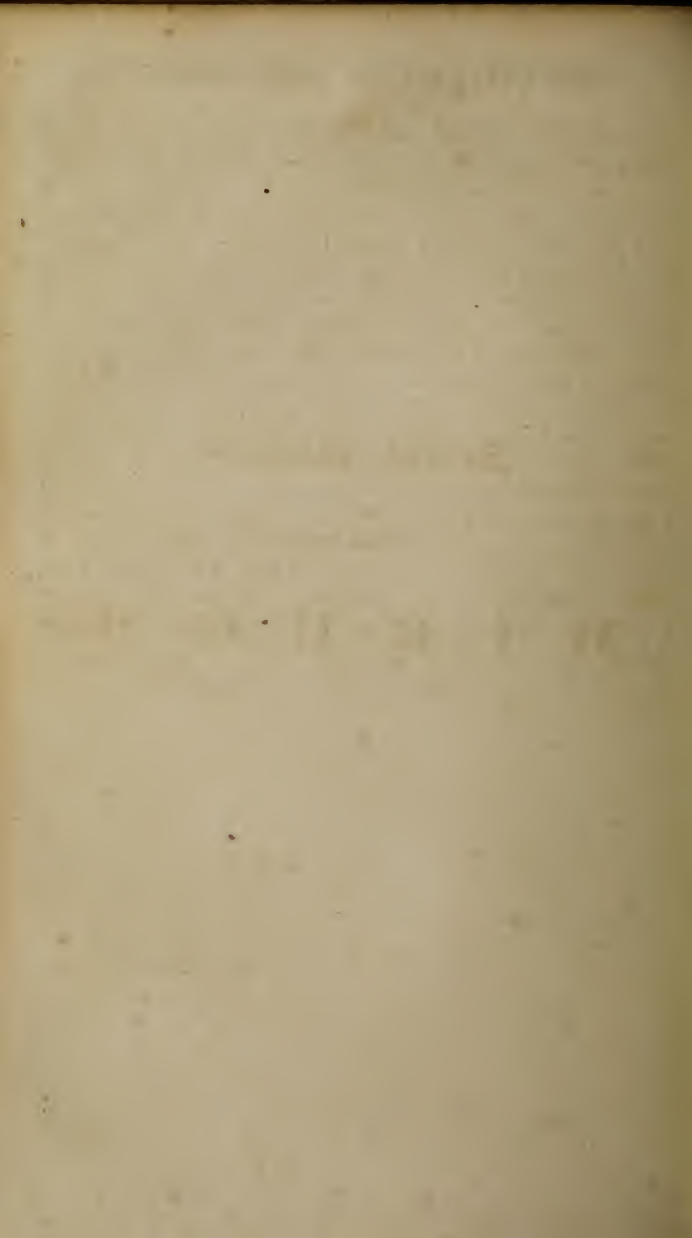
Yet, upon examination, this very inconstancy, so remarkable here, flows from no other source than their love of reasoning. The man, who examines a complicated subject on every side, and calls in reason to his assistance, will frequently change; will find himself distracted by opposing probabilities and contending proofs; every alteration of place will diversify the prospect, will give some latent argument new force, and contribute to maintain an anarchy in the mind.

On the contrary, they who never examine with their own reason act with more simplicity. Ignorance is positive, instinct perseveres, and the human being moves in safety within the narrow circle of brutal uniformity. What is true with regard to in-

dividuals, is not less so when applied to states. A reasoning government, like this, is in continual fluctuation; while those kingdoms, where men are taught, not to controvert, but obey, continue always the same. In Asia, for instance, where the monarch's authority is supported by force, and acknowledged through fear, a change of government is entirely unknown. All the inhabitants seem to wear the same mental complexion, and remain contented with hereditary oppression. The sovereign's pleasure is the ultimate rule of duty; every branch of the administration is a perfect epitome of the whole; and if one tyrant is deposed, another starts up in his room, to govern as his predecessor. The English, on the contrary, instead of being led by power, endeavour to guide themselves by reason; instead of appealing to the pleasure of the princes, appeal to the original rights of mankind. What one rank of men assert is denied by others, as the reasons on opposite sides happen to come home with greater or less conviction. The people of Asia are directed by precedent, which never alters; the English by reason, which is ever changing its appearance.

The disadvantages of an Asiatic government, acting in this manner by precedent, are evident; original errors are thus continued without hopes of redress; and all marks of genius are levelled down to one standard, since no superiority of thinking can be allowed its exertion in mending obvious defects. But, to recompense those defects, their governments undergo no new alterations; they have no new evils to fear, nor no fermentations in the constitution, that continue. The struggle for power is soon over, and all becomes tranquil as before. They are habituated to subordination; and men are taught to form no other desires than those which they are allowed to satisfy.

The disadvantages of a government acting from the immediate influence of reason, like that of England, are not less than those of the former. It is extremely difficult to induce a number of free beings to co-operate for their mutual benefit; every possible advantage will necessarily be sought, and every attempt to procure it must be attended with a new fermentation: various reasons will lead different ways, and equity and advantage will often be out-balanced by a combination of clamour and prejudice. But though such a people may be thus in the wrong, they have been influenced by an happy delusion; their errors are seldom seen till they are felt; each man is himself the tyrant he has obeyed, and such a master he can easily forgive. The disadvantages he feels may, in reality, be equal to what is felt in the most despotic government; but man will bear every calamity with patience, when he knows himself to be the author of his own misfortunes. Adieu.



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Select Papers

FROM THE

M I R R O R.

Wednesday, February 10, 1779.

PEDANTRY, in the common sense of the word, means an absurd ostentation of learning, and stiffness of phraseology, proceeding from a misguided knowledge of books, and a total ignorance of men.

But I have often thought, that we might extend its signification a good deal farther; and, in general, apply it to that failing, which disposes a person to obtrude upon others subjects of conversation relating to his own business, studies, or amusement.

In this sense of the phrase, we should find pedants in every character and condition of life. Instead of a black coat and plain shirt, we should often see pedantry appear in an embroidered suit and Brussels lace; instead of being bedaubed with snuff, we should find it breathing perfumes; and, in place of a book-worm, crawling through the gloomy cloisters of an university, we should mark it in the state of a gilded butterfly, buzzing through the gay region of the drawing-room.

Robert Daisey, Esq. is a pedant of this last kind. When he tells you that his ruffles cost twenty guineas a pair; that his buttons were the first of the kind, made by one of the most eminent artists in Birmingham: that his buckles were procured by means of a

friend at Paris, and are the exact pattern of those worn by the Comte d'Artois; that the loop of his hat was of his own contrivance, and has set the fashion to half a dozen of the finest fellows in town; when he descants on all these particulars, with that smile of self-complacency which sits for ever on his cheek, he is as much a pedant as his quondam tutor, who recites verses from Pindar, tells stories out of Herodotus, and talks for an hour on the energy of the Greek particles.

But Mr. Daisey is struck dumb by the approach of his brother Sir Thomas, whose pedantry goes a pitch higher, and pours out all the intelligence of France and Italy, whence the young baronet is just returned, after a tour of fifteen months over all the kingdoms of the continent. Talk of music, he cuts you short with the history of the first singer at Naples; of painting, he runs you down with a description of the gallery at Florence; of architecture, he overwhelms you with the dimensions of St. Peter's, or the great church at Antwerp; or, if you leave the province of art altogether, and introduce the name of a river or hill, he instantly deluges you with the Rhine, or makes you dizzy with the height of Etna or Mont Blanc.

Miss will have no difficulty of owning her great aunt to be a pedant, when she talks all the time of dinner on the composition of the pudding, or the seasoning of the mince pies; or enters into a disquisition on the figure of the damask tablecloth, with a word or two on the thrift of making one's own linen: but the young lady will be surprised when I inform her, that her own history of last Thursday's assembly, with the episode of Lady Dr's feather, and the digression to the qualities of Mr. Fizzle the hairdresser, was also a piece of downright pedantry.

Mrs. Caudle is guilty of the same weakness, when

she recounts the numberless witticisms of her daughter Emmy, describes the droll figure her little Bill made yesterday at trying on his first pair of breeches, and informs us, that Bobby has got seven teeth, and is just cutting an eighth, though he will be but nine months old next Wednesday, at six o'clock in the evening. Nor is her pedantry less disgusting, when she proceeds to enumerate the virtues and good qualities of her husband; though this last species is so uncommon, that it may, perhaps, be admitted into conversation for the sake of variety.

Muckworm is the meanest of pedants, when he tells you of the scarcity of money at present, and that he is amazed how people can afford to live as they do; that for his part, though he has a tolerable fortune, he finds it exceedingly difficult to command cash for his occasions; that trade is so dead, and debts so ill paid at present, that he was obliged to sell some shares of Bank stock to make up the price of his last purchase; and had actually countermanded a service of plate, else he should have been obliged to strike several names out of the list of his weekly pensioners; and that this apology was sustained the other day by the noble company (giving you a list of three or four peers, and their families), who did him the honour to eat a bit of mutton with him. All this, however, is true. As is also another anecdote, which Muckworm forgot to mention: his first cousin dined that day with the servants, who took compassion on the lad, after he had been turned down stairs, with a refusal of twenty pounds to set him up in the trade of a shoemaker.

There is pedantry in every disquisition, however masterly it may be, that stops the general conversation of the company. When Silius delivers that sort

of lecture he is apt to get into, though it is supported by the most extensive information and the clearest discernment, it is still pedantry; and, while I admire the talents of Silius, I cannot help being uneasy at his exhibition of them. In the course of this dissertation, the farther a man proceeds the more he seems to acquire strength and inclination for the progress. Last night, after supper, Silius began upon Protestantism, proceeded to the Irish massacre, went through the Revolution, drew the character of King William, repeated anecdotes of Schomberg, and ended, at a quarter past twelve, by delineating the course of the Boyne, in half a bumper of port, upon my best table; which river, happening to overflow its banks, did infinite damage to my cousin Sophy's white satin petticoat.

In short, every thing, in this sense of the word, is pedantry, which tends to destroy that equality of conversation, which is necessary to the perfect ease and good humour of the company. Every one would be struck with the unpoliteness of that person's behaviour, who should help himself to a whole plate of pease or strawberries, which some friend had sent him for a rarity in the beginning of the season. Now conversation is one of those good things, of which our guests or companions are equally entitled to a share, as of any other constituent part of the entertainment; and it is as essential a want of politeness to engross the one as to monopolize the other.

Besides, it unfortunately happens, that we are very inadequate judges of the value of our own discourse, or the rate at which the dispositions of our company will incline them to hold it. The reflections we make, and the stories we tell, are to be judged of by others, who may hold a very different opinion of their acuteness or their humour. It will be prudent,

therefore, to consider, that the dish we bring to this entertainment, however pleasing to our own taste, may prove but moderately palatable to those we mean to treat with it; and that, to every man, as well as ourselves (except a few very humble ones), his own conversation is the plate of pease or strawberries.

——— *Inertibus horis
Ducere sollicitæ jucunda oblivia vitæ.*

HOR.

THERE are some weaknesses, which, as they do not strike us with the malignity of crimes, and produce their effects by imperceptible progress, we are apt to consider as venial, and make very little scruple of indulging. But the habit, which apologizes for these, is a mischief of their own creation, which it behoves us early to resist. We give way to it at first, because it may be conquered at any time; and, at last, excuse ourselves from the contest, because it has grown too strong to be overcome.

Of this nature is indolence, a failing, I had almost said a vice, of all others the least alarming, yet, perhaps, the most fatal. Dissipation and intemperance are often the transient effects of youthful heat, which time allays, and experience overcomes; but indolence “grows with our growth, and strengthens with our strength,” till it has weakened every exertion of public and private duty; yet so seducing, that its evils are unfelt, and its errors unrepented of.

It is a circumstance of peculiar regret, that this should often be the propensity of delicate and amiable minds. Men, unfeeling and unsusceptible,

commonly beat the beaten track with activity and resolution; the occupations they pursue, and the enjoyments they feel seldom much disappoint the expectations they have formed; but persons endowed with that nice perception of pleasure and pain, which is annexed to sensibility, feel so much undescribable uneasiness in their pursuits, and frequently so little satisfaction in their attainments, that they are too often induced to sit still, without attempting the one or desiring the other.

The complaints, which such persons make of their want of that success which attends men of inferior abilities, are as unjust as unavailing. It is from the use, not the possession of talents, that we get on in life: the exertion of very moderate parts outweighs the indecision of the brightest. Men possessed of the first, do things tolerably, and are satisfied; of the last, forbear doing things well, because they have ideas beyond them.

When I first resolved to publish this paper, I applied to several literary friends for their aid in carrying it on. From one gentleman in London, I had, in particular, very sanguine expectations of assistance. His genius and abilities I had early opportunities of knowing, and he is now in a situation most favourable to such productions, as he lives amidst the great and the busy world without being much occupied either by ambition or business. His compositions at college, when I first became acquainted with him, were remarkable for elegance and ingenuity; and, as I knew he still spent much of his time in reading the best writers, ancient and modern, I made no doubt of his having attained such farther improvement of style, and extension of knowledge, as would render him a very valuable contributor to the Mirror.

A few days ago, more than four months after I

had sent him my letter, I received the following answer to it : —

“ London, 1st March, 1779.

“ MY DEAR FRIEND,

“ I am ashamed to look on the date of this letter, and to recollect that of yours. I will not, however, add the sin of hypocrisy to my other failings, by informing you, as is often done in such cases, that hurry of business, or want of health, has prevented me from answering your letter. I will frankly confess, that I have had abundance of leisure, and been perfectly well since I received it; I can add, though, perhaps, you may not so easily believe me, that I have had as much inclination as opportunity; but the truth is (you know my weakness that way), I have wished, resolved, and re-resolved to write, as I do by many other things, without the power of accomplishing it. That disease of indolence, which you and my other companions used to laugh at, grows stronger and stronger upon me; my symptoms, indeed, are mortal; for I begin now to lose the power of struggling against the malady, sometimes to shut my ears against self-admonition, and admit of it as a lawful indulgence.

“ Your letter, acquainting me of the design of publishing a periodical paper, and asking my assistance in carrying it on, found me in one of the paroxysms of my disorder. The fit seemed to give way to the call of friendship. I got up from my easy chair, walked two or three turns through the room, read your letter again, looked at the Spectators, which stood, neatly bound and gilt, in the front of my book press, called for pen, ink, and paper, and sat down, in the fervour of imagination, ready to combat vice, to encourage virtue, to form the manners, and to

regulate the taste of millions of my fellow subjects. A field fruitful and unbounded lay before me; I began to speculate on the prevailing vices and reigning follies of the times, the thousand topics which might arise for declamation, satire, ridicule, and humour; the picture of manners, the shades of character, the delicacies of sentiment. I was bewildered amidst this multitude and variety of subjects, and sat dreaming over the redundancy of matter, and the ease of writing, till the morning was spent, and my servant announced dinner.

"I arose, satisfied with having thought much, and laid in store for writing much on subjects proper for your paper. I dined, if you will allow me the expression, in company with those thoughts, and drank half a bottle of wine after dinner to our better acquaintance. When my man took away, I returned to my study, sat down at my writing-table, folded my paper into proper margins, wrote the word *Mirror* atop, and, filling my pen again, drew up the curtain, and prepared to delineate the scene before me. But I found things not quite in the situation I had left them; the groups were more confused, the figures less striking, the colours less vivid, than I had seen them before dinner. I continued, however, to look on them—I know not how long; for I was waked from a very sound nap, at half an hour past six, by Peter asking me, if I chose to drink coffee.

"I was ashamed and vexed at the situation in which he found me. I drank my first dish rather out of humour with myself; but, during the second, I began to account for it from natural causes; and, before the third was finished, had resolved that study was improper after repletion, and concluded the evening with the adventures of one of the three *Callendars*, out of the *Arabian Nights Entertainments*.

“ For all this arrear, I drew, resolutely, on to-morrow, and after breakfast prepared myself accordingly. I had actually gone so far as to write three introductory sentences, all of which I burnt, and was just blacking the letter T for the beginning of a fourth, when Peter opened the door and announced a gentleman, an old acquaintance, whom I had not seen for a considerable time. After he had sat with me for more than an hour, he rose to go away ; I pulled out my watch, and I will fairly own I was not sorry to find it within a few minutes of one : so I gave up the morning for lost, and invited myself to accompany my friend in some visits he proposed making. Our tour concluded in a dinner at a tavern, whence we repaired to the play, and did not part till midnight. I went to bed without much self-reproach, by considering, that intercourse with the world fits a man for reforming it.

“ I need not go through every day of the subsequent month, during which I remained in town, though there seldom passed one that did not remind me of what I owed to your friendship. It is enough to tell you, that, during the first fortnight, I always found some apology for delaying the execution of my purpose ; and, during the last, contented myself with the prospect of the leisure I should soon enjoy in the country, to which I was invited by a relation to spend some time with him previous to his coming to town for the winter. I arrived at his house about the middle of December. I looked on his fields, his walks, and his woods, which the extreme mildness of the season had still left in the garb of Thomson’s philosophic melancholy, as scenes full of inspiration, in which Genius might try her wings, and Wisdom meditate, without interruption. But I am obliged to own, that, though I have walked there many a time ; though my fancy was warmed with the scene, and shot out into a thousand excursions over the regions of romance, of melancholy, of sentiment, of

humour, of criticism, and of science, she returned, like the first messenger of Noah, without having found a resting place : and I have, at last, strolled back to the house, where I sat listless in my chamber, with the irksome consciousness of some unperformed resolution, from which I was glad to be relieved by a summons to billiards, or a call to dinner.

“ Thus have I returned to town, as unprofitable in the moments of solitude and retirement, as in those of business or society. Do not smile at the word business ; what would be idleness to you, is to me very serious employment ; besides, you know very well, that to be idle, is often to be least at leisure. I am now almost hardy enough to lay aside altogether my resolution of writing in your paper ; but I find that resolution a sort of bond against me, till you are good enough to cancel it, by saying, you do not expect me to write. I have made a more than ordinary effort to give you this sincere account of my attempts to assist you. I have at least the consolation of thinking, that you will not need my assistance. Believe me, with all my failings,

“ Most sincerely and affectionately yours,

“ —————

“ P. S. — I have just now learned by accident, that my nephew, a lad of fifteen, who is come to town from Harrow school, and lives at present with me, having seen one of your Numbers about a week ago, has already written, and intends transmitting you a political essay, signed Aristides, a pastoral subscribed X. Y., and an acrostic on Miss E. M. without a signature.”

Tantæne animis cœlestibus iræ ?

VIRG.

WHILE so many subjects of contention occupy the votaries of business and ambition, and prove the

source of discord, envy, jealousy, and rivalry, among mankind, one would be apt to imagine, that the pursuits and employments of studious and literary men would be carried on with calmness, good temper, and tranquillity. The philosophic sage, retired from the world, who has truth for the object of his inquiries, might be willing, it were natural to suppose, to give up his own system, when he found it at variance with truth, and would never quarrel with another for adopting a different one; and the man of elegance and taste, who has literary entertainment in view, would not, one should think, find fault with the like amusements of other men, or dispute, with rancour or heat, upon mere matters of taste. But the fact has been otherwise: the disputes among the learned have, in every age, been carried on with the utmost virulence; and men, pretending to taste, have railed at each other with unparalleled abuse. Possibly the abstraction from the world, in which the philosopher lives, may render him more impatient of contradiction than those who mix oftener with common societies; and perhaps, that fineness and delicacy of perception, which the man of taste acquires, may be more liable to irritation than the coarser feelings of minds less cultivated and improved.

I have been led into these remarks by a conversation at which I happened lately to be present. Last week, having left with my editor materials for my next paper, I went to the country for a few days, to pay a visit to a friend, whose real name I shall conceal under that of Sylvester. Sylvester, when a young man, had retired to the country, and having succeeded to a paternal estate, which was sufficient for all his wants, had lived almost constantly at home. His time was spent chiefly in study, and he had published some performances which did honour to his genius and knowledge. During all this time,

Sylvester was the regular correspondent of a gentleman whom I shall here call Alcander, whose taste and pursuits were in many respects similar to his own. Alcander, though he was not an author like Sylvester, had from nature a very delicate taste, which had been much improved by culture. From a variety of accidents, the two friends had not met for a great number of years; but, while I was at Sylvester's house, he received a letter from Alcander, notifying that gentleman's being on his way to visit him; and soon after he arrived accordingly.

It is not easy to describe the pleasure which the two friends felt at meeting. After the first salutations, their discourse took a literary turn. I was delighted, as well as instructed, with the remarks which were made upon men and books, by two persons of extensive information and accomplished taste; and the warmth with which they made them, added a relish to their observations. The conversation lasted till it was very late, when my host and his friends retired to their apartments, much pleased with each other, and in full expectation of additional entertainment from a continuation of such intercourse at the return of a new day.

Next morning, after breakfast, their literary discourse was renewed. It turned on a comparison of the different genius and merit of the French and English authors. Sylvester said, he thought there was a power of reasoning, a strength of genius, and a depth of reflection in the English authors, of which the French, in general, were incapable; and that, in his opinion, the preference lay greatly on the side of the writers of our country. Alcander begged leave to differ from him; he admitted, there was an appearance of depth in many of the English authors, but he said it was false and

hollow. He maintained, that the seeking after something profound, had led into many useless metaphysical disquisitions, in which the writer had no real merit, nor could the reader find any real advantage. But the French authors, he said, excelled in remarks on life and character, which, as they were founded on actual observation, might be attended with much utility, and, as they were expressed in the liveliest manner, could not fail to give the highest entertainment. Alcander, in the course of his argument, endeavoured to illustrate it by a comparison of some of the most distinguished authors of both countries. Sylvester finding those writers whom he had studied with attention, and imitated with success, so warmly attacked, replied with some heat, as if he thought it tended to the disparagement of his own compositions. Sylvester said something about French frivolity; and Alcander replied with a sarcasm on metaphysical absurdity.

Finding the conversation take this unlucky turn, I endeavoured to change the subject; and from the comparison of the English and French authors, took occasion to mention that period of English literature, which has been frequently termed the Augustan age of England, when that constellation of wits appeared which illuminated the reign of Queen Anne.

But this subject of conversation was as unfortunate as the former. Sylvester is a professed admirer of Swift, to whom his attachment is perhaps heightened by a little Toryism in his political principles. Alcander is a keen Whig, and as great an admirer of Addison. As the conversation had grown rather warm on a general comparison of the authors of one country with those of another, so its warmth was much greater when the comparison was made of two particular favourite authors. Sylvester talked of the strength, the dignity, the

forcible observation, and the wit of Swift ; Alcander of the ease, the gracefulness, the native and agreeable humour of Addison. From remarks upon their writings, they went to their characters. Sylvester spoke in praise of openness of spirit, and threw out something against envy, jealousy, and meanness. Alcander inveighed against pride and ill-nature, and pronounced an eulogium on elegance, philanthropy, and gentleness of manners. Sylvester spoke as if he thought no man of a candid and generous mind could be a lover of Addison ; Alcander, as if none but a severe and ill-tempered one could endure Swift.

The spirits of the two friends were now heated to a violent degree, and not a little rankled at each other. I endeavoured again to give the discourse a new direction, and, as if accidentally, introduced something about the Epistles of Phalaris. I knew both gentlemen were masters of the dispute upon that subject, which has so much divided the learned, and I thought a dry question of this sort could not possibly interest them too much. But in this I was mistaken. Sylvester and Alcander took different sides upon this subject, as they had done upon the former, and supported their opinions with no less warmth than before. Each of them caught fire from every thing his opponent said, as if neither could think well of the judgment of that man who was of an opinion different from his own.

With this last debate the conversation ended. At our meeting next day, a formal politeness took place between Sylvester and Alcander, very different from that openness and cordiality of manner which they showed at their first meeting. The last, soon after, took his departure ; and, I believe, neither of them felt that respect for each other's understanding, nor that warmth of affection, which they entertained before this visit.

Alas ! the two friends did not consider that it was

their being too much alike, their being engaged in similar employments, that changed their friendship into this coldness. Both attached to the same pursuits, and accustomed to indulge them chiefly in seclusion and solitude, they had been too little accustomed to bear contradiction. This impatience of contradiction had not been corrected in either, by attention to the feelings or views of others; and the warmth which each felt in supporting his own particular opinion, prevented him from giving the proper indulgence to a diversity of opinion in the other.

Sincerum cupimus vas incrustare.

HOR.

“ TO THE AUTHOR OF THE MIRROR.

“ SIR,

“ YOUR Mirror, it seems, possesses uncommon virtues, and you generously hold it out to the Public, that we may dress our characters at it. I trust it is, at least, a faithful glass, and will give a just representation of those lurking imperfections or excellencies which we distinguish with difficulty, or sometimes altogether overlook. I struggle, therefore, to get forward in the crowd, and to set before your moral Mirror a personage who has long embarrassed me.

“ The observation of character, when I first looked beyond a college for happiness, formed not only my amusement, but, for some years, my favourite study. I had been so fortunate as early to imbibe strict notions of morality and religion, and to arrive at manhood in perfect ignorance of vicious pleasure. My heart was, therefore, led to place its hopes of happiness in love and friendship: but books had taught me to dread misplacing my affec-

tions. On this account, anxious to gratify the *soif d'aimer* that engrossed me, I bent the whole of my little talents to discern the characters of my acquaintance ; and, blending sentiments of religion with high notions of moral excellence, and the refined intercourse of cultivated minds, I fondly hoped, that, where I once formed an attachment, it would last for ever.

“ In this state of mind I became acquainted with Cleone. She was young and beautiful, but without that dimpling play of features which indicates, in some women, a mind of extreme sensibility. Her eye bespoke good sense, and was sometimes lighted up with vivacity, but never sparkled with the keenness of unrestrained joy, nor melted with the suffusion of indulged sorrow. Her manner and address had no tendency to familiarity ; it was genteel, rather than graceful. Her voice in conversation was suited to her manner ; it possessed those level tones which never offend, but seldom give pleasure, and seldomer emotion.

“ Her conversation was plain and sensible. Never attempting wit or humour, she contented herself with expressing, in correct and unaffected language, just sentiments on manners, and on works of taste : and the genius she displayed in compositions becoming her sex, and the propriety of her own conduct, did honour to her criticisms. She sung with uncommon excellence. Her voice seemed to unfold itself in singing, to suit every musical expression, and to assume every tone of passion she wished to utter. I never felt the power of simple melody in agitating, affecting, and pleasing, more strongly than from her performance.

“ In company she was attentive, *prevenante*, but not insinuating ; and though she seemed to court the society of men of letters and taste, and to pro-

fess having intimate friendships with some individuals among them, I never could perceive that she was subject to the common weakness of making a parade of this kind of intercourse.

“Most people would suppose that I had found, in Cleone, the friend I was seeking; for both of us knew we could never be nearer than friends to each other, and she treated me with some distinction. I found it, however, impossible to know her so well as to place in her the complete confidence essential to friendship. The minutest attention to every circumstance in her appearance and behaviour, and studying her for years in all the little varieties of situation that an intimate acquaintance gave access to observe, proved unequal to discover, with certainty, the genuine character of her disposition or temper. No caprice betrayed her: no predominant shade could be marked in her tears, in her laughs, or in her smiles. Sometimes, however, I have thought she breathed a softness of soul that tempted me to believe her generous; but, when I considered a little, the inner recesses of her heart appeared still shut against the observer; and I well knew, that even poignant sensibility is not inconsistent with predominant selfishness.

“When contemplating Cleone, I have often thought of that beautiful trait in the description of Petrarca’s Laura: ‘*Il lampeggiar dell’ angelico riso.*’ The lightening of her angel smile. These flashes of affection breaking from the soul, alone display the truth, generosity, and tenderness, that deserve a friend. These gleams from the heart show us all its intricacies, its weakness and its vigour, and expose it naked and undisguised to the spectator. A single minute will, in this way, give more knowledge of a character, and justly, therefore, attract more confidence, than twenty

years' experience of refinement of taste and propriety of conduct.

"I am willing to believe it was some error in education which had wrapt up Cleone's character in so much obscurity, and not any natural defect that rendered it prudent to be invisible. If there is an error of this kind, I hope your Mirror will expose it, and prevent it from robbing superior minds of their best reward—the confidence of each other.

"In the present state of society, we have few opportunities of exhibiting our true characters by our actions; and the habits of the world soon throw upon our manners a veil that is impenetrable to others, and nearly so to ourselves. Hence the only period when we can form friendships is a few years in youth; for there is a reserve in the deportment, and a certain selfishness in the occupations of manhood, unfavourable to the forming of warm attachments. It is, therefore, fatal to the very source of friendship, if, when yet children, we are to be prematurely bedaubed with the varnish of the world. And yet, I fear, this is the necessary effect of modern education.

"In place of cherishing the amiable simplicity and frankness of children, every emanation of the heart is checked by the constant restraints, dissimulation, and frivolous forms of fashionable address, with which we harass them. Hence they are nearly the same at fourteen as at five-and-twenty, when, after a youth spent in joyless dissipation, they enter life, slaves to selfish appetites and reigning prejudices, and devoid of that virtuous energy of soul, which strong attachments, and the habits of deserved confidence inspire. Even those who, like Cleone, possess minds superior to the common mould, though they cultivate their talents with success, and, in some measure, educate

themselves anew, find it impossible to get rid entirely of that artificial manner, and those habits of restraint, with which they had been so early imbued.

“ Thus, like French tailors and dancing masters, pretending to add grace and ornament to nature, we constrain, distort, and encumber her; whereas the education of a polished age should, like the drapery of a fine statue or portrait, confer decency, propriety, and elegance, and gracefully veil, but by no means conceal, the beautiful forms of nature.

“ LÆLIUS.”

——— *Et isti*
Errori nomen virtus posuisset honestum.

HOR.

I WAS lately applied to by a friend, in behalf of a gentleman, who, he said, had been unfortunate in life, to whom he was desirous of doing a particular piece of service, in which he thought my assistance might be useful: “ Poor fellow!” said he, “ I wish to serve him, because I always knew him, dissipated and thoughtless as he was, to be a good hearted man, guilty of many imprudent things, indeed, but without meaning any harm! In short, no one’s enemy but his own.”

I afterwards learned more particularly the circumstances of this gentleman’s life and conversation, which I will take the liberty of laying before my readers, in order to show them what they are to understand by the terms used by my friend, terms, which, I believe, he was nowise singular in using.

The person, whose interests he espoused, was heir to a very considerable estate. He lost his father when an infant; and being, unfortunately,

an only son, was too much the darling of his mother ever to be contradicted. During his childhood he was not suffered to play with his equals, because he was to be the king of all sports, and to be allowed a sovereign and arbitrary dominion over the persons and properties of his playfellows. At school he was attended by a servant, who helped him to thrash boys who were too strong to be thrashed by himself, and had a tutor at home, who translated the Latin which was too hard for him to translate. At college he began to assume the man, by treating at taverns, making parties to the country, filling his tutor drunk, and hiring blackguards, to break the windows of the professor with whom he was boarded. He took in succession the degrees of a wag, a pickle, and a lad of mettle. For a while, having made an elopement with his mother's maid, and fathered three children of other people, he got the appellation of a dissipated dog; but, at last, betaking himself entirely to the bottle, and growing red faced and fat, he obtained the denomination of an honest fellow; which title he continued to enjoy as long as he had money to pay, or indeed much longer, while he had credit to score for his reckoning.

During this last part of his progress, he married a poor girl, whom her father, from a mistaken idea of his fortune, forced to sacrifice herself to his wishes. After a very short space, he grew too indifferent about her to use her ill, and broke her heart with the best natured neglect in the world. Of two children whom he had by her, one died at nurse, soon after the death of its mother; the eldest, a boy of spirit like his father, after twice running away from school, was at last sent aboard a Guinea-man, and was knocked on the head by a sailor, in a quarrel about a Negro wench, on the coast of Africa.

Generosity, however, was a part of his character, which he never forfeited. Beside lending money genteelly to many worthless companions, and becoming surety for every man who asked him, he did some truly charitable actions to very deserving objects. These were told to his honour; and people who had met with refusals from more considerate men, spoke of such actions as the genuine test of feeling and humanity. They misinterpreted scripture for indulgence to his errors on account of his charity, and extolled the goodness of his heart in every company where he was mentioned. Even while his mother, during her last illness, was obliged to accept of money from her physician, because she could not obtain payment of her jointure, and while, after her decease, his two sisters were dunning him every day, without effect, for the small annuity left them by their father, he was called a good-hearted man by three-fourths of his acquaintance; and when, after having pawned their clothes rather than distress him, those sisters commenced a lawsuit to force him to do them justice, the same impartial judges pronounced them hard-hearted and unnatural: nay, the story is still told to their prejudice, though they now prevent their brother from starving out of the profits of a little shop, which they were then obliged to set up for their support.

The abuse of the terms used by my friend, in regard to the character of this unfortunate man, would be sufficiently striking from the relation I have given, without the necessity of my offering any comment on it. Yet the misapplication of them is a thousand times repeated by people who have known and felt instances, equally glaring of such injustice. It may seem invidious to lessen the praises of any praiseworthy quality; but it is essential to the interests of virtue, that insensibility should not be allowed to assume the title of good-

nature, nor profusion to usurp the honours of generosity.

The effect of such misplaced and ill-founded indulgence is hurtful in a double degree. It encourages the evil which it forbears to censure, and discourages the good qualities which are found in men of decent and sober characters. If we look into the private histories of unfortunate families, we shall find most of their calamities to have proceeded from a neglect of the useful duties of sobriety, economy, and attention to domestic concerns, which, though they shine not in the eye of the world, nay, are of en subject to its obloquy, are yet the surest guardians of virtue, of honour, and of independence.

Be just before you are generous is a good old proverb, which the profligate hero of a much admired comedy is made to ridicule, in a well-turned, and even a sentimental period. But what right have those squanderers of their own and other men's fortunes to assume the merit of generosity? Is parting with that money, which they value so little, generosity? Let them restrain their dissipation, their riot, their debauchery, when they are told that these bring ruin on the persons and families of the honest and industrious, let them sacrifice one pleasure to humanity, and then tell us of their generosity and their feeling. A transient instance, in which the prodigal relieved want with his purse, or the thoughtless debauchee promoted merit by his interest, no more deserves the appellation of generosity, than the rashness of a drunkard is entitled to the praises of valour, or the freaks of a madman to the laurels of genius.

In the character of a man, considered as a being of any respect at all, we immediately see a relation to his friends, his neighbours, and his country. His duties only confer real dignity, and, what may

not be so easily allowed, but is equally true, can bestow real pleasure. I know not an animal more insignificant, or less happy, than a man without any ties of affection, or any exercise of duty. He must be very forlorn, or very despicable, indeed, to whom it is possible to apply the phrase used by my friend, in characterizing the person whose story I have related above, and to say, that he is no one's enemy but his own.

Tuesday, April 20.

“ TO THE AUTHOR OF THE MIRROR.

“ SIR,

“ SOME time ago, I troubled you with a letter, giving an account of a particular sort of grievance felt by the families of men of small fortunes, from their acquaintance with those of great ones. I am emboldened, by the favourable reception of my first letter, to write you a second upon the same subject.

“ You will remember, Sir, my account of a visit which my daughters paid to a great lady in our neighbourhood, and of the effects which that visit had upon them. I was beginning to hope, that time, and the sobriety of manners which home exhibited, would restore them to their former situation, when, unfortunately, a circumstance happened, still more fatal to me than their expedition to——. This, Sir, was the honour of a visit from the great lady in return.

“ I was just returning from the superintendence of my ploughs in a field I have lately inclosed, when I was met, on the green before my door, by a gentleman (for such I took him to be) mounted upon a very handsome gelding, who asked me, by the appellation of honest friend, if this was not Mr. Home-spun's; and, in the same breath, whether the ladies

were at home? I told him my name was Homespun, the house was mine, and my wife and daughters were, I believed, within. Upon this, the young man, pulling off his hat, and begging my pardon for calling me honest, said, he was dispatched by Lady ———, with her compliments to Mrs. and Misses Homespun, and that, if convenient, she intended herself the honour of dining with them, on her return from B—— park, the seat of another great and rich lady in our neighbourhood.

“I confess, Mr. Mirror, I was struck somewhat of an heap with the message; and it would not, in all probability, have received an immediate answer, had it not been overheard by my eldest daughter, who had come to the window on the appearance of a stranger. ‘Mr. Papillot,’ said she immediately, ‘I rejoice to see you; I hope your lady and all the family are well.’ ‘Very much at your service, Ma’am,’ he replied, with a low bow; ‘my lady sent me before, with the offer of her best compliments, and that, if convenient’—and so forth, repeating his words to me. ‘She does us infinite honour,’ said my young madam; ‘let her ladyship know how happy her visit will make us; but, in the mean time, Mr. Papillot, give your horse to one of the servants, and come in and have a glass of something after your ride.’ ‘I am afraid,’ answered he, pulling out his right hand watch, for, would you believe it, Sir? the fellow had one in each fob, ‘I shall hardly have time to meet my lady at the place she appointed me.’ On a second invitation, however, he dismounted, and went into the house, leaving his horse to the care of the servants; but the servants, as my daughter very well knew, were all in the fields at work; so I, who have a liking for a good horse, and cannot bear to see him neglected, had the honour of putting Mr. Papillot’s in the stable myself.

— “After about an hour’s stay, for the gentleman

seemed to forget his hurry within doors, Mr. Papillot departed. My daughters, I mean the two polite ones, observed how handsome he was: and added another observation, that it was only to particular friends my lady sent messages by him, who was her own body servant, and not accustomed to such offices. My wife seemed highly pleased with this last remark: I was about to be angry; but on such occasions it is not my way to say much; I generally shrug up my shoulders in silence; yet, as I said before, Mr. Mirror, I would not have you think me henpeck'd.

“By this time, every domestic about my house, male and female, were called from their several employments to assist in the preparations for her ladyship's reception. It would tire you to enumerate the various shifts that were made, by purchasing, borrowing, &c., to furnish out a dinner suitable to the occasion. My little grey poney, which I keep for sending to market, broke his wind in the cause, and has never been good for any thing since.

“Nor was there less ado in making ourselves and our attendants fit to appear before such company. The female part of the family managed the matter pretty easily; women, I observe, have a natural talent that way. My wife took upon herself the charge of apparelling me for the occasion. A laced suit, which I had worn at my marriage, was got up for the purpose; but the breeches burst a seam at the very first attempt of pulling them on, and the sleeves of the coat were also impracticable; so she was forced to content herself with clothing me in my Sunday's coat and breeches, with the laced waistcoat of the above-mentioned suit, slit in the back, to set them off a little. My gardener, who has been accustomed, indeed, to serve in many capacities, had his head cropped, curled, and powdered, for the part of butler; one of the best looking plough-boys had a yellow cap clapped to his Sun-

day's coat to make him pass for a servant in livery; and we borrowed my son-in-law the parson's man for a third hand.

"All this was accomplished, though not without some tumult and disorder, before the arrival of the great lady. She gave us, indeed, more time for the purpose than we looked for, as it was near six o'clock before she arrived. But this was productive of a misfortune on the other hand; the dinner my poor wife had bustled, sweated, and scolded for, was so over-boiled, over-stewed, and over-roasted, that it needed the appetite of so late an hour to make it go well down even with me, who am not very nice in these matters: luckily her ladyship, as I am told, never eats much, for fear of spoiling her shape, now that small waists have come into fashion again.

"The dinner, however, though spoiled in the cooking, was not thrown away, as her ladyship's train made shift to eat the greatest part of it. When I say her train, I do not mean her servants only, of which there were half a dozen in livery, besides the illustrious Mr. Papillot, and her ladyship's maid, gentlewoman I should say, who had a table to themselves. Her parlour attendants were equally numerous, consisting of two ladies and six gentlemen, who had accompanied her ladyship in this excursion, and did us the honour of coming to eat and drink with us, and bringing their servants to do the same, though we had never seen or heard of them before.

"During the progress of this entertainment, there were several little embarrassments which might appear ridiculous in description, but were matters of serious distress to us. Soup was spilled, dishes overturned, and glasses broken, by the awkwardness of our attendants; and things were not a bit mended by my wife's solicitude, who, to do her justice, had all her eyes about her, to correct them.

"From the time of her ladyship's arrival, it was impossible that dinner could be over before it was

dark; this, with the consideration of the bad road she had to pass through in her way to the next house she meant to visit, produced an invitation from my wife and daughters to pass the night with us; which, after a few words of apology for the trouble she gave us, and a few more of the honour we received, was agreed to. This gave rise to a new scene of preparation, rather more difficult than that before dinner. My wife and I were dislodged from our own apartment, to make room for our noble guest. Our four daughters were crammed in by us, and slept on the floor, that their rooms might be left for the two ladies and four of the gentlemen who were entitled to the greatest degree of respect; for the remaining two, we found beds at my son-in-law's. My two eldest daughters had indeed little time to sleep, being closeted the greatest part of the night with their right honourable visitor. My offices were turned topsy-turvy for the accommodation of the servants of my guests, and my own horses turned into the fields, that theirs might occupy my stable.

"All these are hardships of their kind, Mr. Mirror, which the honour that accompanies them seems to me not fully to compensate; but these are slight grievances, in comparison with what I have to complain of as the effects of this visit. The malady of my two eldest daughters is not only returned with increased violence upon them, but has now communicated itself to every other branch of my family. My wife, formerly a decent discreet woman, who liked her own way, indeed, but was a notable manager, now talks of this and that piece of expense as necessary to the rank of a gentlewoman, and has lately dropped some broad hints, that a winter in town is necessary to the accomplishment of one. My two younger daughters have got the heads that formerly belonged to their elder sisters, to each of

whom, unfortunately, the great lady presented a set of feathers, for which new heads were essentially requisite.

“ The inside of all of them has undergone a very striking metamorphosis, from this one night’s instruction of their visitor. There is, it seems, a fashion in morality, as well as in dress; and the present mode is not quite so strait-laced as the stays are. My two fine ladies talked, a few mornings ago, of such a gentleman’s connection with Miss C ———, and such another’s arrangement with Lady G ———, with all the ease in the world: yet these words, I find, being interpreted, mean nothing less than fornication and adultery. I sometimes remonstrate warmly, especially when I have my son-in-law to back me, against these new-fangled freedoms; but another doctrine they have learned is, that a father and a parson may preach as they please, but are to be followed only according to the inclination of their audience. Indeed I could not help observing, that my Lady ——— never mentioned her absent Lord, who, I understand, is seldom of her parties, except sometimes to let us know how much she differed in opinion from him.

“ This contempt of authority, and affectation of fashion, has gone a step lower in my household. My gardener has tied his hair behind, and stolen my flour to powder it, ever since he saw Mr. Papillot; and yesterday he gave me warning that he should leave me next term, if I did not take him into the house, and provide another hand for the work in the garden. I found a great hoyden, who washes my daughters’ linens, sitting, the other afternoon, dressed in one of their cast fly-caps, entertaining this same oaf of a gardener, and the wives of two of my farm-servants, with tea, forsooth; and when I quarrelled her for it, she replied, that Mrs. Dimmity, my Lady ———’s gentlewoman, told her all

the maids at —— had tea, and saw company of an afternoon.

“ But I am resolved on a reformation, Mr. Mirror, and shall let my wife and daughters know, that I will be master of my own house and my own expenses, and will neither be made a fool or a beggar, though it were after the manner of the greatest lord in Christendom. Yet I confess I am always for trying gentle methods first. I beg, therefore, that you will insert this in your next paper, and add to it some exhortations of your own to prevail on them, if possible, to give over a behaviour, which I think, under favour, is rather improper even in great folks, but is certainly ruinous to little ones.

“ I am, &c.

“ JOHN HOMESPUN.”

Mr Homespun's relation, too valuable to be shortened, leaves me not room at present for any observations. But I have seen the change of manners among some of my countrywomen, for several years past, with the most sensible regret ; and I intend soon to devote a paper to a serious remonstrance with them on the subject.

Saturday, June 19.

WHEN I first undertook this publication, it was suggested by some of my friends, and, indeed, accorded entirely with my own ideas, that there should be nothing of religion in it. There is a sacredness in the subject that might seem profaned by its introduction into a work, which, to be extensively read, must sometimes be ludicrous, and often ironical. This consideration will apply, in the strongest manner, to any thing mystic or controversial ; but it may, perhaps, admit of an exception,

when religion is only introduced as a feeling, not a system; as appealing to the sentiments of the heart, not to the disquisitions of the head. The following story holds it up in that light, and is therefore, I think, admissable into the Mirror. It was sent to my editor as a translation from the French. Of this my readers will judge. Perhaps they might be apt to suspect, without any suggestion from me, that it is an original, not a translation. Indeed, I cannot help thinking, that it contains in it much of that picturesque description, and that power of awakening the tender feelings, which so remarkably distinguish the composition of a gentleman whose writings I have often read with pleasure. But, be that as it may, as I felt myself interested in the narrative, and believed that it would affect my readers in the like manner, I have ventured to give it entire as I received it, though it will take up the room of three successive papers. S.

“ TO THE AUTHOR OF THE MIRROR.

“ SIR,

“ MORE than forty years ago, an English philosopher, whose works have since been read and admired by all Europe, resided at a little town in France. Some disappointments in his native country had first driven him abroad, and he was afterwards induced to remain there, from having found in this retreat, where the connections even of nation and language were avoided, a perfect seclusion and retirement, highly favourable to the development of abstract subjects, in which he excelled all the writers of his time.

“ Perhaps, in the structure of such a mind as Mr. ———’s, the finer and more delicate sensibilities are seldom known to have place, or, if originally implanted there, are in a great measure extinguished

by the exertions of intense study and profound investigation. Hence the idea of philosophy and unfeelingness being united, has become proverbial, and in common language, the former word is often used to express the latter. Our philosopher has been censured by some, as deficient in warmth and feeling; but the mildness of his manners has been allowed by all; and it is certain, that, if he was not easily melted into compassion, it was, at least, not difficult to awaken his benevolence.

“ One morning, while he sat busied in those speculations, which afterwards astonished the world, an old female domestic, who served him for a house-keeper, brought him word, that an elderly gentleman and his daughter had arrived in the village the preceding evening, on their way to some distant country, and that the father had been suddenly seized in the night with a dangerous disorder, which the people of the inn where they lodged feared would prove mortal: that she had been sent for, as having some knowledge in medicine, the village surgeon being then absent; and that it was truly piteous to see the good old man, who seemed not so much afflicted by his own distress as by that which it caused to his daughter. Her master laid aside the volume in his hand, and broke off the chain of ideas it had inspired. His nightgown was exchanged for a coat, and he followed his *gouvernante* to the sick man’s apartment.

“ ’Twas the best in the little inn where they lay, but a paltry one notwithstanding. Mr. ——— was obliged to stoop as he entered it. It was floored with earth; and above were the joists, not plastered, and hung with cobwebs. On a flock bed, at one end, lay the old man he came to visit. At the foot of it sat his daughter. She was dressed in a clean white bed gown: her dark locks hung loosely over it as she bent forward, watching the languid looks

of her father. Mr. ——— and his housekeeper had stood some moments in the room without the young lady's being sensible of their entering it. 'Mademoiselle!' said the old woman at last, in a soft tone. She turned, and showed one of the finest faces in the world. It was touched, not spoiled, with sorrow; and when she perceived a stranger, whom the old woman now introduced to her, a blush at first, and then the gentle ceremonial of native politeness, which the affliction of the time tempered but did not extinguish, crossed it for a moment, and changed its expression. 'Twas sweetness all, however, and our philosopher felt it strongly. It was not a time for words: he offered his services in a few sincere ones. 'Monsieur lies miserably ill here,' said the *gouvernante*; 'if he could possibly be moved anywhere.' 'If he could be moved to our house,' said her master. He had a spare bed for a friend, and there was a garret room unoccupied, next to the *gouvernante's*. It was contrived accordingly. The scruples of the stranger, who could look scruples, though he could not speak them, were overcome, and the bashful reluctance of his daughter gave way to her belief of its use to her father. The sick man was wrapt in blankets, and carried across the street to the English gentleman's. The old woman helped his daughter to nurse him there. The surgeon, who arrived soon after, prescribed a little, and nature did much for him; in a week he was able to thank his benefactor.

By that time his host had learned the name and character of his guest. He was a Protestant clergyman of Switzerland, called La Roche, a widower, who had lately buried his wife, after a long and lingering illness, for which travelling had been prescribed; and was now returning home, after an ineffectual and melancholy journey, with his only child, the daughter we have mentioned.

“He was a devout man, as became his profession. He possessed devotion in all its warmth, but with none of its asperity; I mean that asperity, which men, called devout, sometimes indulge in. Mr. ———, though he felt no devotion, never quarrelled with it in others. His *gouvernante* joined the old man and his daughter in the prayers and thanksgivings which they put up on his recovery; for she, too, was a heretic, in the phrase of the village. The philosopher walked out, with his long staff and his dog, and left them to their prayers and thanksgivings. ‘My master,’ said the old woman, ‘alas! he is not a Christian; but he is the best of unbelievers.’ ‘Not a Christian!’ exclaimed Mademoiselle La Roche, ‘yet he saved my father. Heaven bless him for’t; I would he were a Christian!’ ‘There is a pride in human knowledge, my child,’ said her father, ‘which often blinds men to the sublime truths of revelation: hence opposers of Christianity are found among men of virtuous lives, as well as among those of dissipated and licentious characters. Nay, sometimes I have known the latter more easily converted to the true faith than the former, because the fume of passion is more easily dissipated than the mist of false theory and delusive speculation.’ ‘But Mr. ———,’ said his daughter, ‘—Alas! my father, he shall be a Christian before he dies.’ She was interrupted by the arrival of their landlord. He took her hand with an air of kindness. She drew it away from him in silence; threw down her eyes to the ground, and left the room. ‘I have been thanking God,’ said the good La Roche, ‘for my recovery.’ ‘That is right,’ replied his landlord. ‘I would not wish,’ continued the old man, hesitatingly, ‘to think otherwise. Did I not look up with gratitude to that Being, I should barely be satisfied with my recovery, as a continuation of life, which, it may be, is not a real good. Alas! I may

live to wish I had died — that you had left me to die, Sir, instead of kindly relieving me (he clasped Mr. ———'s hand); but when I look on this renovated being as the gift of the Almighty, I feel a far different sentiment: my heart dilates with gratitude and love to him: it is prepared for doing his will, not as a duty but as a pleasure, and regards every breach of it, not with disapprobation, but with horror.' 'You say right, my dear Sir,' replied the philosopher; 'but you are not yet re-established enough to talk much: you must take care of your health, and neither study nor preach for some time. I have been thinking over a scheme that struck me to-day, when you mentioned your intended departure. I never was in Switzerland: I have a great mind to accompany your daughter and you into that country. I will help to take care of you by the road; for, as I was your first physician, I hold myself responsible for your cure.' La Roche's eyes glistened at the proposal. His daughter was called in and told of it: she was equally pleased with her father; for they really loved their landlord — not perhaps the less for his infidelity; at least that circumstance mixed a sort of pity with their regard for him; their souls were not of a mould for harsher feelings; hatred never dwelt in them.

Tuesday, June 22.

"THEY travelled by short stages; for the philosopher was as good as his word, in taking care that the old man should not be fatigued. The party had time to be well acquainted with one another, and their friendship was increased by acquaintance. La Roche found a degree of simplicity and gentleness in his companion, which is not always annexed to the character of a learned or a wise man. His daughter,

who was prepared to be afraid of him, was equally undeceived. She found in him nothing of that self-importance, which superior parts, or great cultivation of them, is apt to confer. He talked of every thing but philosophy or religion: he seemed to enjoy every pleasure and amusement of ordinary life, and to be interested in the most common topics of discourse; when his knowledge or learning at any time appeared, it was delivered with the utmost plainness, and without the least shadow of dogmatism.

“ On his part, he was charmed with the society of the good clergyman and his lovely daughter. He found in them the guileless manner of the earliest times, with the culture and accomplishment of the most refined ones. Every better feeling warm and vivid; every ungentle one repressed or overcome. He was not addicted to love; but he felt himself happy in being the friend of Mademoiselle La Roche, and sometimes envied her father the possession of such a child.

“ After a journey of eleven days, they arrived at the dwelling of La Roche. It was situate in one of those valleys of the canton of Berne, where nature seems to repose, as it were in quiet, and has inclosed her retreat with mountains inaccessible. A stream, that spent its fury in the hills above, ran in front of the house, and a broken waterfall was seen through the wood that covered its sides; below, it circled round a tufted plain, and formed a little lake in front of a village, at the end of which appeared the spire of La Roche’s church, rising above a clump of beeches.

“ Mr. ——— enjoyed the beauty of the scene; but to his companions it recalled the memory of a wife and parent they had lost. The old man’s sorrow was silent; his daughter sobbed and wept. Her father took her hand, kissed it twice, pressed it to

his bosom, threw up his eyes to Heaven, and, having wiped off a tear that was just about to drop from each, began to point out to his guest some of the most striking objects which the prospect afforded. The philosopher interpreted all this; and he could but slightly censure the creed from which it arose.

“They had not been long arrived, when a number of La Roche’s parishioners, who had heard of his return, came to the house to see and welcome him. The honest folks were awkward, but sincere, in their professions of regard. They made some attempts at condolence — it was too delicate for their handling; but La Roche took it in good part. ‘It has pleased God,’ said he, and they saw he had settled the matter with himself. Philosophy could not have done so much with a thousand words.

“It was now evening, and the good peasants were about to depart, when a clock was heard to strike seven, and the hour was followed by a particular chime. The country folks, who had come to welcome their pastor, turned their looks towards him at the sound: he explained their meaning to his guest. ‘That is the signal,’ said he, ‘for our evening exercise; this is one of the nights of the week in which some of my parishioners are wont to join in it: a little rustic saloon serves for the chapel of our family, and such of the good people as are with us. If you choose rather to walk out, I will furnish you with an attendant; or here are a few old books that may afford you some entertainment within.’ ‘By no means,’ answered the philosopher; ‘I will attend Mademoiselle at her devotions.’ ‘She is our organist,’ said La Roche: ‘our neighbourhood is the country of musical mechanism; and I have a small organ fitted up for the purpose of assisting our singing.’ ‘’Tis an additional inducement,’ replied the other; and they walked into the room together.

At the end stood the organ mentioned by La Roche; before it was a curtain, which his daughter threw aside, and, placing herself on a seat within, and drawing the curtain close, so as to save her the awkwardness of an exhibition, began a voluntary, solemn and beautiful in the highest degree. Mr. ——— was no musician, but he was not altogether insensible to music; this fastened on his mind more strongly from its beauty being unexpected. The solemn prelude introduced a hymn, in which such of the audience as could sing immediately joined: the words were mostly taken from holy writ: it spoke the praises of God, and his care of good men. Something was said of the death of the just, of such as die in the Lord.——The organ was touched with a hand less firm:—it paused—it ceased—and the sobbing of Ma'moiselle La Roche was heard in its stead. Her father gave a sign for stopping the psalmody, and rose to pray. He was discomposed at first, and his voice faltered as he spoke; but his heart was in his words, and his warmth overcame his embarrassment. He addressed a Being whom he loved, and he spoke for those he loved. His parishioners caught the ardour of the good old man: even the philosopher felt himself moved, and forgot, for a moment, to think why he should not.

“La Roche's religion was that of sentiment, not theory, and his guest was averse from disputation; their discourse, therefore, did not lead to questions concerning the belief of either: yet would the old man sometimes speak of his, from the fulness of a heart impressed with its force, and wishing to spread the pleasure he enjoyed in it. The ideas of his God, and his Saviour, were so congenial to his mind, that every emotion of it naturally awaked them. A philosopher might have called him an enthusiast; but, if he possessed the fervour of enthusiasts, he was guiltless of their bigotry. ‘Our Father which art

in Heaven!’ might the good man say — for he felt it — and all mankind were his brethren.

“ ‘You regret, my friend,’ said he to Mr. ———, ‘when my daughter and I talk of the exquisite pleasure derived from music, you regret your want of musical powers and musical feelings; it is a department of soul, you say, which nature has almost denied you, which, from the effects you see it have on others, you are sure must be highly delightful. Why should not the same thing be said of religion? Trust me, I feel it in the same way, an energy, an inspiration, which I would not lose for all the blessings of sense, or enjoyments of the world; yet, so far from lessening my relish of the pleasures of life, methinks I feel it heighten them all. The thought of receiving it from God adds the blessing of sentiment to that of sensation in every good thing I possess; and when calamities overtake me (and I have had my share) it confers a dignity on my affliction, —so lifts me above the world. Man, I know, is but a worm: yet, methinks, I am then allied to God!’ It would have been inhuman in our philosopher to have clouded, even with a doubt, the sunshine of this belief.

“ His discourse, indeed, was very remote from metaphysical disquisition or religious controversy. Of all men I ever knew, his ordinary conversation was the least tinctured with pedantry, or liable to dissertation. With La Roche and his daughter it was perfectly familiar. The country round them, the manners of the village, the comparison of both with those of England, remarks on the works of favourite authors, on the sentiments they conveyed, and the passions they excited, with many other topics, in which there was an equality, or alternate advantage among the speakers, were the subjects they talked on. Their hours, too, of riding and walking were many, in which Mr. ———, as a stranger, was

shown the remarkable scenes and curiosities of the country. They would sometimes make little expeditions to contemplate, in different attitudes, those astonishing mountains, the cliffs of which, covered with eternal snows, and sometimes shooting into fantastic shapes, form the termination of most of the Swiss prospects. Our philosopher asked many questions as to their natural history and productions. La Roche observed the sublimity of the ideas which the view of the stupendous summits, inaccessible to mortal foot, was calculated to inspire, 'which naturally,' said he, 'leads the mind to that Being by whom their foundations were laid.' 'They are not seen in Flanders!' said Ma'moiselle, with a sigh. 'That's an odd remark,' said Mr. ———, smiling. She blushed, and he inquired no farther.

" 'Twas with regret he left a society, in which he found himself so happy ; but he settled with La Roche and his daughter a plan of correspondence ; and they took his promise, that, if ever he came within fifty leagues of their dwelling, he should travel those fifty leagues to visit them.

Saturday, June 26.

"ABOUT three years after, our philosopher was on a visit at Geneva ; the promise he made to La Roche and his daughter, on his former visit, was recalled to his mind, by the view of that range of mountains, on a part of which they had often looked together. There was a reproach, too, conveyed along with the recollection, for his having failed to write to either for several months past. The truth was, that indolence was the habit most natural to him, from which he was not easily roused by the claims of correspondence either of his friends or of his enemies ; when the latter drew their pens in controversy, they

were often unanswered as well as the former. While he was hesitating about a visit to La Roche, which he wished to make, but found the effort rather too much for him, he received a letter from the old man, which had been forwarded to him from Paris, where he had then his fixed residence. It contained a gentle complaint of Mr. ——'s want of punctuality, but an assurance of continued gratitude for his former good offices; and, as a friend, whom the writer considered interested in his family, it informed him of the approaching nuptials of Ma'moiselle La Roche, with a young man, a relation of her own, and formerly a pupil of her father's, of the most amiable dispositions and respectable character. Attached from their earliest years, they had been separated by his joining one of the subsidiary regiments of the Canton, then in the service of a foreign power. In this situation he had distinguished himself as much for courage and military skill, as for the other endowments which he had cultivated at home. The term of his service was now expired, and they expected him to return in a few weeks, when the old man hoped, as he expressed it in his letter, to join their hands and see them happy before he died.

“Our philosopher felt himself interested in this event; but he was not, perhaps, altogether so happy in the tidings of Ma'moiselle La Roche's marriage, as her father supposed him. Not that he was ever a lover of the lady's; but he thought her one of the most amiable women he had seen, and there was something in the idea of her being another's for ever, that struck him, he knew not why, like a disappointment. After some little speculation on the matter, however, he could look on it as a thing fitting, if not quite agreeable, and determined on this visit to see his old friend and his daughter happy.

“On the last day of his journey, different accidents

had retarded his progress; he was benighted before he reached the quarter in which La Roche resided. His guide, however, was well acquainted with the road, and he found himself at last in view of the lake, which I have before described, in the neighbourhood of La Roche's dwelling. A light gleamed on the water, that seemed to proceed from the house; it moved slowly along as he proceeded up the side of the lake, and at last he saw it glimmer through the trees, and stop at some distance from the place where he then was. He supposed it some piece of bridal merriment, and pushed on his horse that he might be a spectator of the scene; but he was a good deal shocked, on approaching the spot, to find it proceed from the torch of a person clothed in the dress of an attendant on a funeral, and accompanied by several others, who, like him, seemed to have been employed in the rites of sepulture.

"On Mr. ——'s making inquiry who was the person they had been burying? one of them, with an accent more mournful than is common to their profession, answered, 'Then you knew not Mademoiselle, Sir!—you never beheld a lovelier—' 'La Roche!' exclaimed he in reply; 'Alas! it was she indeed!' The appearance of surprise and grief, which his countenance assumed, attracted the notice of the peasant with whom he talked. He came up closer to Mr. ——; 'I perceive, Sir, you were acquainted with Mademoiselle La Roche.' 'Acquainted with her!—Good God!—when—how—where did she die? Where is her father?' 'She died, Sir, of heart break, I believe; the young gentleman, to whom she was soon to have been married, was killed in a duel by a French officer, his intimate companion, and to whom, before their quarrel, he had often done the greatest favours. Her worthy father bears her death, as he has often told

us a Christian should ; he is even so composed as to be now in his pulpit, ready to deliver a few exhortations to his parishioners, as is the custom with us on such occasions : follow me, Sir, and you shall hear him.' He followed the man without answering.

" The church was dimly lighted, except near the pulpit, where the venerable La Roche was seated. His people were now lifting up their voices in a psalm to that Being whom their pastor had taught them ever to bless and to revere. La Roche sat, his figure bending gently forward, his eyes half-closed, lifted up in silent devotion. A lamp placed near him, threw its light strong on his head, and marked the shadowy lines of age across the paleness of his brow, thinly covered with grey hairs.

" The music ceased, La Roche sat for a moment, and nature wrung a few tears from him. His people were loud in their grief. Mr. ——— was not less affected than they. La Roche arose. ' Father of mercies ! ' said he, ' forgive these tears : assist thy servant to lift up his soul to thee ; to lift to thee the souls of thy people ! My friends ! it is good so to do : at all seasons it is good ; but, in the days of our distress, what a privilege it is ! Well saith the sacred book, Trust in the Lord ; at all times trust in the Lord. When every other support fails us, when the fountains of worldly comfort are dried up, let us then seek those living waters which flow from the throne of God. 'Tis only from the belief of the goodness and wisdom of a Supreme Being, that our calamities can be borne in that manner which becomes a man. Human wisdom is here of little use : for, in proportion as it bestows comfort, it represses feeling, without which we may cease to be hurt by calamity, but we shall also cease to enjoy happiness. I will not bid you be insensible, my friends ! I cannot, I cannot, if I would' (his tears flowed afresh). ' I feel too much myself, and I am not ashamed of my

feelings ; but therefore may I the more willingly be heard ; therefore have I prayed God to give me strength to speak to you ; to direct you to him, not with empty words, but with these tears ; not from speculation, but from experience, that while you see me suffer, you may know also my consolation.

“ ‘ You behold the mourner of his only child, the last earthly stay and blessing of his declining years ! Such a child too ! It becomes not me to speak of her virtues ; yet it is but gratitude to mention them, because they were exerted towards myself. Not many days ago you saw her young, beautiful, virtuous, and happy : ye who are parents will judge of my felicity then, ye will judge of my affliction now. But I look towards him who struck me ; I see the hand of a father amidst the chastenings of my God. Oh ! could I make you feel what it is to pour out the heart, when it is pressed down with many sorrows, to pour it out with confidence to him, in whose hands are life and death, on whose power awaits all that the first enjoys, and in contemplation of whom disappears all that the last can inflict ! For we are not as those who die without hope ; we know that our Redeemer liveth, that we shall live with him, with our friends his servants, in that blessed land where sorrow is unknown, and happiness is endless as it is perfect. Go then, mourn not for me ; I have not lost my child : but a little while, and we shall meet again never to be separated. But ye are also my children : would ye that I should not grieve without comfort ? So live as she lived : that when your death cometh, it may be the death of the righteous, and your latter end like his.’ ”

“ Such was the exhortation of La Roche ; his audience answered it with their tears. The good old man had dried up his at the altar of the Lord ; his countenance had lost its sadness, and assumed the glow of faith and of hope. Mr. ——— followed

him into his house. The inspiration of the pulpit was past; at sight of him the scenes they had last met in rushed again on his mind; La Roche threw his arms round his neck, and watered it with his tears. The other was equally affected; they went together, in silence, into the parlour where the evening service was wont to be performed. The curtains of the organ were open; La Roche started back at the sight. 'Oh! my friend,' said he, and his tears burst forth again. Mr. ——— had now recollected himself; he stepped forward, and drew the curtains close, the old man wiped off his tears, and taking his friend's hand, 'You see my weakness,' said he, ' 'tis the weakness of humanity; but my comfort is not therefore lost.' 'I heard you,' said the other, 'in the pulpit; I rejoice that such consolation is yours.' 'It is, my friend,' said he, 'and I trust I shall ever hold it fast; if there are any who doubt our faith, let them think of what importance religion is to calamity, and forbear to weaken its force; if they cannot restore our happiness, let them not take away the solace of our affliction.'

"Mr. ———'s heart was smitten; and I have heard him, long after, confess that there were moments when the remembrance overcame him even to weakness: when, amidst all the pleasures of philosophical discovery, and the pride of literary fame, he recalled to his mind the venerable figure of the good La Roche, and wished that he had never doubted."

Tuesday, July 13.

AS I walked one evening, about a fortnight ago, through St. Andrew's Square, I observed a girl, meanly dressed, coming along the pavement at a

slow pace. When I passed her, she turned a little towards me, and made a sort of halt, but said nothing, I am ill at looking any body full in the face; so I went on a few steps before I turned my eye to observe her. She had, by this time, resumed her former pace. I remarked a certain elegance in her form, which the poorness of her garb could not altogether overcome; her person was thin and genteel, and there was something not ungraceful in the stoop of her head, and the seeming feebleness with which she walked. I could not resist the desire, which her appearance gave me, of knowing somewhat of her situation and circumstances: I therefore walked back, and repassed her with such a look (for I could bring myself to nothing more) as might induce her to speak what she seemed desirous to say at first. This had the effect I wished. "Pity a poor orphan!" said she, in a voice tremulous and weak. I stopped, and put my hand in my pocket. I had now a better opportunity of observing her. Her face was thin and pale: part of it was shaded by her hair, of a light brown colour, which was parted in a disordered manner, at her forehead, and hung loose upon her shoulders; round them was cast a piece of tattered cloak, which with one hand she held across her bosom, while the other was half outstretched to receive the bounty I intended for her. Her large blue eyes were cast on the ground: she was drawing back her hand as I put a trifle into it; on receiving which she turned them up to me, muttered something which I could not hear, and then, letting go her cloak, and pressing her hands together, burst into tears.

It was not the action of an ordinary beggar, and my curiosity was strongly excited by it. I desired her to follow me to the house of a friend hard by whose beneficence I have often had occasion to

know. When she arrived there, she was so fatigued and worn out, that it was not till after some means used to restore her, that she was able to give us an account of her misfortunes.

Her name, she told us, was Collins; the place of her birth one of the northern counties of England. Her father, who had died several years ago, left her remaining parent with the charge of her, then a child, and one brother, a lad of seventeen. By his industry, however, joined to that of his mother, they were tolerably supported, their father having died possessed of a small farm, with the right of pasture-age on an adjoining common, from which they obtained a decent livelihood: that, last summer, her brother having become acquainted with a recruiting serjeant, who was quartered in a neighbouring village, was by him enticed to list as a soldier, and soon after was marched off, along with some other recruits, to join his regiment: that this, she believed, broke her mother's heart, for that she had never afterwards had a day's health, and at length had died about three weeks ago: that, immediately after her death, the steward employed by the squire of whom their farm was held, took possession of every thing for the arrears of their rent: that, as she had heard her brother's regiment was in Scotland when he enlisted, she had wandered hither in quest of him, as she had no other relation in the world to own her! But she found, on arriving here, that the regiment had been embarked several months before, and was gone a great way off, she could not tell whither.

"This news," said she, "laid hold of my heart, and I have had something wrong here," putting her hand to her bosom, "ever since. I got a bed and some victuals in the house of a woman here in town, to whom I told my story, and who seemed to pity me. I had then a little bundle of things, which I

had been allowed to take with me after my mother's death ; but the night before last, somebody stole it from me while I slept ; and so the woman said she would keep me no longer, and turned me out into the street, where I have since remained, and am almost famished for want."

She was now in better hands ; but our assistance had come too late. A frame, naturally delicate, had yielded to the fatigues of her journey, and the hardships of her situation. She declined by slow but uninterrupted degrees, and yesterday breathed her last. A short while before she expired, she asked to see me ; and taking from her bosom a little silver locket, which she told me had been her mother's, and which all her distresses could not make her part with, begged I would keep it for her dear brother, and give it him, if ever he should return home, as a token of her remembrance.

I felt this poor girl's fate strongly ; but I tell not her story merely to indulge my feelings ; I would make the reflections it would excite in my readers, useful to others who may suffer from similar causes. There are many, I fear, from whom their country has called brothers, sons, or fathers, to bleed in her service, forlorn, like poor Nancy Collins, with " no relation in the world to own them." Their sufferings are often unknown, when they are such as most demand compassion. The mind that cannot obtrude its distresses on the ear of pity is formed to feel their poignancy the deepest.

In our idea of military operations, we are too apt to forget the misfortunes of the people. In defeat, we think of the fall, and in victory, of the glory of commanders ; we seldom allow ourselves to consider how many, in a lower rank, both events make wretched : how many, amidst the acclamations of national triumph, are left to the helpless misery of the widowed and the orphan ; and, while victory ce-

lebrates her festival, feel, in their distant hovels, the extremities of want and wretchedness.

It was with pleasure I saw, among the resolutions of a late patriotic assembly in this city, an agreement to assist the poor families of our absent soldiers and seamen. With no less satisfaction I read in some late newspapers, a benevolent advertisement for a meeting of gentlemen, to consider of a subscription for the same purpose. At this season of general and laudable exertion, I am persuaded such a scheme cannot fail of patronage and success. The benevolence of this country requires not argument to awaken it; yet the pleasures of its exertion must be increased by the thought, that pity to such objects is patriotism; that, here, private compassion becomes public virtue. Bounties, for the encouragement of recruits to our fleets and armies, are highly meritorious donations. These, however, may sometimes bribe the covetous, and allure the needy; but that charity, which gives support and protection to the families they leave behind, addresses more generous feelings; feelings which have always been held congenial to bravery and to heroism. It endears to them that home which their swords are to defend, and strengthens those ties which should ever bind the soldier of a free state to his country.

Nor will such a provision be of less advantage to posterity than to the present times. It will save to the state many useful subjects, which those families thus supported may produce, whose lives have formerly been often nurtured by penury to vice, and rendered not only useless, but baneful to the community; that community which, under a more kindly influence, they might, like their fathers, have enriched by their industry, and protected by their valour.

Tuesday, July 26.

“ TO THE AUTHOR OF THE MIRROR.

“ SIR,

“ I AM one of the young women mentioned in two letters which you published in your twelfth and twenty-fifth Numbers, though I did not know till very lately that our family had been put into print in the Mirror. Since it is so, I think I too may venture to write you a letter, which, if it be not quite so well written as my father's (though I am no great admirer of his style neither), will at least be as true.

“ Soon after my Lady ——'s visit at our house, of which the last of my father's letters informed you, a sister of his, who is married to a man of business here in Edinburgh, came with her husband to see us in the country; and, though my sister Mary and I soon discovered many vulgar things about them, yet, as they were both very good-humoured sort of people, and took great pains to make themselves agreeable, we could not help looking with regret to the time of their departure. When that drew near, they surprised us, by an invitation to me, to come and spend some months with my cousins in town, saying, that my mother could not miss my company at home, while she had so good a companion and assistant in the family as her daughter Mary.

“ To me there were not so many allurements in this journey as might have been imagined. I had lately been taught to look on London as the only capital worth visiting; besides that, I did not expect the highest satisfaction from the society I should meet with at my aunt's, which, I confess, I was apt to suppose none of the most genteel. I contrived to keep the matter in suspense (for it was left entirely to my own determination),

till I should write for the opinion of my friend Lady ——— on the subject; for, ever since our first acquaintance, we had kept up a constant and regular correspondence. In our letters, which were always written in a style of the warmest affection, we were in the way of talking with the greatest freedom of every body of our acquaintance. It was delightful, as her ladyship expressed it, ‘to unfold one’s feelings in the bosom of friendship;’ and she accordingly was wont to send me the most natural and lively pictures of the company who resorted to ———; and I, in return, transmitted her many anecdotes of those persons which chance, or a greater intimacy, gave me an opportunity of learning. To prevent discovery, we corresponded under the signatures of Hortensia and Leonora; and some very particular intelligence her ladyship taught me not to commit to ink, but to set down in lemon juice. I wander from my story, Mr. Mirror; ‘but I cannot help fondly recalling,’ as Emilia in the novel says, ‘those halcyon days of friendship and felicity.’

“When her ladyship’s answer arrived, I found her clearly of opinion that I ought to accept of my aunt’s invitation. She was very jocular on the manners which she supposed I should find in that lady’s family; but she said I might take the opportunity of making some acquirements, which, though London alone could perfect, Edinburgh might, in some degree, communicate. She concluded her letter with requesting the continuation of my correspondence, and a narrative of every thing that was passing in town, especially with regard to some ladies and gentlemen of her acquaintance, whom she pointed out to my particular observation.

“To Edinburgh, therefore, I accompanied my aunt, and found a family very much disposed to

make me happy. In this they might, perhaps, have succeeded more completely, had I not acquired, from the instructions of Lady ———, and the company I saw at her house, certain notions of polite life with which I did not find any thing at Mr. ———'s correspond. It was often, indeed, their good-humour which offended me as coarse, and their happiness that struck me as vulgar. There was not such a thing as hip or low spirits among them, a sort of finery which, at ———, I found a person of fashion could not possibly be without.

“ They were at great pains to show me any sights that were to be seen, with some of which I was really little pleased, and with others I thought it would look like ignorance to seem pleased. They took me to the playhouse, where there was little company, and very little attention. I was carried to the concert, where the case was exactly the same. I found great fault with both; for though I had not much skill, I had got words enough for finding fault from my friend Lady ———: upon which they made an apology for our entertainment, by telling me, that the playhouse was, at that time, managed by a fiddler, and the concert was allowed to manage itself.

“ Our parties at home were agreeable enough. I found Mr. ———'s and my aunt's visitors very different from what I had been made to expect, and not at all the cocknies my Lady ———, and some of her humorous guests, used to describe. They were not, indeed, so polite as the fashionable company I had met at her ladyship's; but they were much more civil. Among the rest was my uncle-in-law's partner, a good looking young man, who, from the first, was so particularly attentive to me, that my cousins jokingly called him my lover; and even my aunt sometimes told me she believed

have a musical party at home. In short, you may come some morning next week, when the hurry will be over, and, if I am am not gone out of town, I will be happy to see you.' I don't know what answer I should have made; but she did not give me an opportunity; for a gentleman in a green uniform coming into the box, she immediately made room for him to sit between us. He, after a broad stare full in my face, turned his back my way, and sat in that posture all the rest of the evening.

"I am not so silly, Mr. Mirror, but I can understand the meaning of all this. My lady, it seems, is contented to have some humble friends in the country, whom she does not think worthy of her notice in town; but I am determined to show her, that I have a prouder spirit than she imagines, and shall not go near her either in town or country. What is more, my father sha'n't vote for her friend at next election, if I can help it.

"What vexes me beyond every thing else is, that I had been often telling my auut and her daughters of the intimate footing I was on with Lady ——, and what a violent friendship we had for each other; and so, from envy, perhaps, they used to nickname me the Countess, and Lady Leonora. Now that they had got this story of the mantua-maker and the playhouse (for I was so angry I could not conceal it), I am ashamed to hear the name of a lady of quality mentioned, even if it be only in a book from the circulating library. Do write a paper, Sir, against pride and haughtiness, and people forgetting their country friends and acquaintance, and you will very much oblige,

"Yours, &c.

"ELIZABETH HOMESPUN."

“P. S. My uncle’s partner, the young gentleman I mentioned above, takes my part when my cousins joke upon intimates with great folks; I think he is a much genteeler and better bred man than I took him for at first.”

Decipimur specie recti.

HOR.

SINCERITY, by which I mean honesty in men’s dealings with each other, is a virtue praised by every one, and the practice of it is, I believe, more common than gloomy moralists are willing to allow. The love of truth, and of justice, are so strongly implanted in our minds, that few men are so hardened, or so insensible, as knowingly and deliberately to commit dishonest actions; and a little observation soon convinces those who are engaged in a variety of transactions, that honesty is wisdom, and knavery folly.

But though, according to this acceptance of the phrase, men are seldom insincere, or literally dishonest, in the ordinary transactions of life; yet, I believe, there is another and a higher species of sincerity, which is very seldom to be met with in any degree of perfection; I mean that sincerity which leads a man to be honest to himself, and to his own mind, and which will prevent him from being imposed upon, or deceived by his own passions and inclinations. From that secret approbation which our minds lead us to give to what is virtuous and honourable, we cannot easily bear the consciousness of being dishonest. Hence therefore, when men are desirous to give way to their evil inclinations and passions, they are willing, nay, at times, they are even at pains to deceive themselves. They look out for some

specious apology, they seek for some colour and disguise, by which they may reconcile their conduct to the appearance of right, and may commit wrong, under the belief that they are innocent, nay, sometimes, that they are acting a praiseworthy part. Thus there are men who would abhor the thought of deceiving others, who are constantly deceiving themselves; and, while they believe that they are sincere, and are really so, in the restricted sense in which I have used this word, are, in all the important actions of their life, under the influence of deceit.

Eubulus is a judge in one of the courts of law. Eubulus believes himself a very honest judge; and it is but doing him justice to allow, that he would not, for any consideration, knowingly, give an unjust decision; yet Eubulus hardly ever gave a fair judgment in any cause where he was connected with, or knew any thing about the parties. If either of them happen to be his friend or relation, or connected with his friends or relations, Eubulus is sure always to see the cause in a favourable light for that friend. If, on the other hand, one of the parties happens to be a person whom Eubulus has a dislike to, that party is sure to lose his suit. In the one case, he sits down to examine the cause, under all the influence and partiality of friendship; his cool senses are run away with; his judgment is blinded, and he sees nothing but the arguments on the side of his friend, and overlooks every thing stated against him. In the other case, he acts under the impressions of dislike, and his judgment is accordingly so determined. A cause was lately brought before Eubulus, where every feeling of humanity and compassion prompted the wish, that one of the parties might be successful; but the right was clearly on the other side. Eubulus sat down to examine it with all the tender feelings full

in his mind ; they guided his judgment, and he determined contrary to justice. During all this, Eubulus believes himself honest. In one sense of the word he is so ; he does not, knowingly or deliberately, give a dishonest judgment ; but, in the higher and more extensive meaning of the word, he is dishonest. He suffers himself to be imposed on by the feelings of friendship and humanity. Nay, far from guarding against it, he aids the imposition, and becomes the willing dupe to his own inclinations.

Licinius was a man of learning and of fancy : he lived at a time when the factions of this country were at their greatest height : he entered into all of them with the greatest warmth, and, in some of the principal transactions of the time, acted a considerable part. With warm attachments, and ungoverned zeal, his opinions were violent, and his prejudices deep-rooted. Licinius wrote a history of his own times : his zeal for the interests he had espoused is conspicuous ; the influence of his prejudices is apparent ; his opinion of the characters of the men of whom he writes is almost everywhere dictated by his knowledge of the party to which they belonged ; and his belief or disbelief of the disputed facts of the time is directed by the connection they had with his own favourite opinions. Phidippus cannot talk with patience of this history or its author ; he never speaks of him but as of a mean, lying fellow, who knowingly wrote the tales of a party, and who, to serve a faction, wished to deceive the public. Phidippus is mistaken : Licinius, in one sense of the word, was perfectly honest ; he did not wish to deceive ; but he was himself under the influence of deception. The heat of his fancy, the violence of his zeal, led him away : convinced that he was much in the right, he was desirous to be still more so ; he viewed,

and was at pains to view every thing in one light; all the characters, and all the transactions of the time, were seen under one colour; and, under this deception, he saw, and thought, and wrote. When Phidippus accuses Licinius of being wilfully dishonest, he is mistaken, and is under the influence of a like deception with that of Licinius. Licinius wrote unfairly, because he saw every thing in one light, and was not at pains to guard against self-deception, or to correct erroneous judgment. Phidippus judges of Licinius unfairly, because he also is under the influence of party, because his system and opinions are different from those of Licinius, and because this leads him to judge harshly of every one who thinks like Licinius.

Lysander is a young man of elegance and sentiment; but he has a degree of vanity which makes him wish to be possessed of fortune, not to hoard, but to spend it. He has a high opinion of female merit; and would not, for any consideration, think of marrying a woman for whom he did not believe he felt the most sincere and ardent attachment. In this situation of mind he became acquainted with Leonora; Leonora's father was dead, and had left her possessed of a very considerable fortune; Lysander had heard of Leonora, and knew she was possessed of a fortune before ever he saw her. She is not remarkable either for the beauties of person or of mind; but the very first time Lysander saw her, he conceived a prepossession in her favour, and which has now grown into a strong attachment. Lysander believes it is her merit only which has produced this; and he would hate himself, if he thought Leonora's being possessed of a fortune had had the least influence upon him. But he is mistaken; he does not know himself, nor that secret power the desire of wealth has over him. The knowledge of Leonora's being an heiress, made

him secretly wish her to be possessed of personal merit before he saw her; when he did see her, he converted his wishes into belief; he desired to be deceived, and he was so. He conceived that she was possessed of every accomplishment of person and of mind; and his imagination being once warmed, he believed and thought that he felt a most violent attachment. Had Leonora been without a fortune, she would never have drawn Lysander's attention; he would have never thought more highly of her merit than he did of that of most other women; and he would not have become the dupe of his wishes and desires.

Amanda is a young lady of the most amiable dispositions. With an elegant form, she possesses a most uncommon degree of sensibility. Her parents reside at Bellfield, in a sequestered part of the country. Here she has few opportunities of being in society, and her time has chiefly been spent in reading. Books of sentiment, novels, and tender poetry, are her greatest favourites. This kind of reading has increased the natural warmth and sensibility of her mind: it has given her romantic notions of life, and particularly warm and passionate ideas about love. The attachment of lovers, the sweet union of hearts, and hallowed sympathy of souls, are continually pictured in her mind. Philemon, a distant relation of Amanda's, happened to pay a visit to Bellfield. Amanda's romantic notions had hitherto been general, and had no object to fix upon. But it is difficult to have warm feelings long, without directing them to some object. After a short acquaintance, Philemon became very particular in his attentions to her. Amanda was not displeased with them; on the contrary, she thought she saw in him all those good qualities which she felt in her own mind. Every look that he gave, and every word that he spoke, confirmed her in this. Every thing she

wished to be in a lover, every thing her favourite authors told her a lover ought to be possessed of, she believed to be in Philemon. Her parents perceived the situation of her mind. In vain did they represent to her the danger she run, and that she had not yet acquaintance enough of Philemon to know any thing, with certainty, about his character. She ascribed these admonitions to the too great coldness and prudence of age, and she disregarded them. Thus did Amanda believe herself deeply enamoured with Philemon; but it could not be with Philemon, for she knew little of him. She was the dupe of her own wishes; and she deceived herself into a belief that she was warmly attached to him, when it was only an ideal being of her own creation, that was the object of her passion. Philemon may be worthy of the love of Amanda, or Amanda may be able to preserve the deception she is under even after marriage; but her danger is apparent.

The influence of self-deception is wonderfully powerful. Different as are the above persons, and different as are their situations, all have been under its guidance. As observed above, dishonesty, in our ordinary transactions in the world, is a vice which only the most corrupted and abandoned are in danger of falling into; but that dishonesty with ourselves, which leads us to be our own deceivers, to become the dupes of our own prevailing passions and inclinations, is to be met with more or less in every character. Here we are, as it were, parties to the deceit, and, instead of wishing to guard against it, we become the willing slaves of its influence. By this means, not only are bad men deceived by evils passions into the commission of crimes, but even the worthiest men, by giving too much way to the best and most amiable feelings of the heart, may be led into fatal errors, and into the most prejudicial misconduct.

*Ingentes Dominos, et claræ nomina famæ
 Illustrique graves nobilitate domos
 Devita.*

SENECA.

IN an excursion I made some months ago to the county of ———, I paid a visit to Antonio, an old acquaintance of my father's, whom I had known from my infancy. He had been exceedingly attentive to me when a boy : and, as he was something of a sportsman, my guardians often permitted me to accompany him to the field, where, as indeed on every occasion, he treated me with the ease and freedom of a companion and an equal. This behaviour, so different from that to which boys are generally accustomed, while it flattered my self-importance, gave me so much favour and affection for Antonio, that I never saw him afterwards, without feeling those agreeable sensations, which accompany the recollection of that happy period of life when we catch the pleasures of the moment, equally regardless of what is past or to come.

I had not heard of Antonio for many months. When I arrived at the village where he lived, I hastened to his house, without any previous inquiry. The countenance of the servant made me suspect all was not well ; and, when I entered his apartment, I found him in the last stage of a dropsy. The sensations that crowded on my mind at the squalid and death-like appearance of the good old man, so different from those in which I was prepared to indulge, had almost overcome me ; but the growing emotion was checked by the countenance with which he beheld it. No sooner was I seated, than, taking my hand, " What a change," said he, with a look of melancholy composure, " is here, since you last saw me ! I was two years older than your father ; had he been alive, he would have been seventy-four next Christmas."

by the ambitious for the distinguished rank he held in the councils of his sovereign, than by the wise and moderate, for being father to two of the most promising young men of the age. They had been acquainted with Antonio from their infancy. They had grown up at the same schools, and studied under the same masters. After an absence of three years they happened to meet at Venice, where Antonio had the good fortune to render them essential service, in extricating them from difficulties in which the impetuosity of the best-conditioned young men will sometimes involve them, especially in a foreign country. They returned together to Britain. Their father, who knew their former connection with Antonio, and had heard of their recent obligation to him, expressed his sense of it in very flattering terms, and earnestly wished for an opportunity to reward it.

I have seen few men who were proof against the attention of ministers. Though it does not always gratify, it seldom fails to excite three of the most powerful passions; vanity, ambition, and avarice. Antonio, I am afraid, did not form an exception to the rule. Though naturally an economist, his mode of life had considerably impaired his fortune. He knew this; but he knew not exactly to what extent. He received gentle remonstrances on the subject from some of his relations in Scotland, who remembered his virtues. In the letters of his sister Leonora, who still retained that affection and attachment to her brother which his attention to her, both before and after her father's death, had impressed upon her mind, he perceived an anxiety, for which he could not otherwise account than from her apprehensions about the situation of his affairs. The patronage of the Earl of W ——— presented itself as a remedy. To him, therefore, he determined to apply. The intimacy in which he lived with his

sons, the friendly manner in which the earl himself always behaved to him, made this appear an easy matter to Antonio : but he was unaccustomed to ask favours even from the great. His spirit rose at the consciousness of their having become necessary ; and he sunk in his own esteem, in being reduced to use the language of solicitation for something like a pecuniary favour. After several fruitless attempts, he could bring himself no farther than to give a distant hint to his companions, the sons of the earl. It was sufficient to them ; and, at the next interview with their father, Antonio received the most friendly assurances of being soon provided for in some way suited to his taste and disposition.

Elated with these hopes, he returned, after a ten years' absence, to visit his friends in Scotland, and to examine into the situation of his affairs. Of the twenty thousand pounds left by his father, there was little more than ten thousand pounds remaining ; and the half of that sum belonged to his sister Leonora. The knowledge of this made no great impression on his mind, as he was certain of being amply provided for ; meanwhile, he thought it his duty to put his sister's fortune in safety ; and, by his whole behaviour to her, during a nine months' residence in Scotland, he confirmed that love and affection which his more early conduct had justly merited.

Tuesday, January 11.

ANTONIO returned to London about the breaking out of the Spanish war in 1739. The parties in the state ran high ; the minister was attacked on all sides, in a language somewhat more decent than what is in use among the patriots of the present day, though it was not, on that account, less poignant and severe. Antonio's patron, the Earl of W——, took part

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with the minister, and both he and his sons, who were by this time in parliament, seemed so much occupied with the affairs of the public, that Antonio was unwilling to disturb them with any private application for himself, until the ferment was somewhat subsided. In the mean time, he continued his usual mode of life; and, though he could not help observing, that many of the great men with whom he had been accustomed to converse on the most easy and familiar terms, began to treat him with a forbidding ceremony, more disgusting to a mind of sensibility than downright insolence; still the consciousness of his situation prevented him from renouncing a society in which the secret admonitions of his heart frequently told him he could not continue, without forfeiting the strongest support of virtue and honour, a proper respect for himself.

Sir Robert Walpole was at last obliged to resign, and along with him a few of his friends, who were most obnoxious to the leaders of the successful party. The Earl of W ——— was not of the number: he still preserved his place in the cabinet; and the new and the old ministers having adjusted their different pretensions, a calm tranquillity succeeded, as the less powerful and disappointed patriots, rendered suspicious by the defection of their principal leaders, could not at once connect themselves into a formidable opposition.

Antonio thought this a proper time to renew his application. That delicacy, which made him formerly shrink at the idea of asking a pecuniary favour, was now no more; his growing necessities, and the habits of submission they produced, had blunted the fine feelings of independence, and he could now, though unnoticed, dance attendance at the levees of the great, like one who had never felt himself their equal. Fortunately there soon happened a vacancy in an office in the department of

the Earl of W——, which was every way suited to Antonio. He modestly reminded the earl of his former promises; and, having made the first application, his request was instantly granted. At that moment Lord C——, who was supposed to be prime minister, arrived to ask the office for the son of a butcher in Kent, who was returning officer in a borough where there was a contested election. The Earl of W—— told the minister, that he had just now promised it to that gentleman, pointing to Antonio. The minister had frequently seen Antonio, and was not unacquainted with his character; congratulated him with much seeming cordiality; and, turning to the Earl of W——, paid him many compliments on his bestowing the office upon one of so distinguished merit: "That consideration," added he, "can compensate for the disappointment I feel in not having obtained it for the person I mentioned to your lordship." Antonio was too well acquainted with the language of the court, not to understand the tendency of all this. The Earl of W—— immediately observed, that, to oblige his lordship, he had no doubt Antonio would readily give up the promise. This was instantly done; and these two noble persons vied with each other in their offers of service; he was given to understand, that the first opportunity should be taken to provide for him in a manner exceeding his wishes.

Though Antonio was not, upon the whole, very well pleased with this incident, he endeavoured to comfort himself with reflecting, that he had now acquired a right of going directly to the minister, which was so much the more agreeable, as he plainly perceived that the sons of the Earl of W——, though they still behaved to him with more ease and attention than many others of his former companions, would, like the rest, soon be estranged from him. At school, at college, on their

travels, and even for some time after their return, their pursuits were the same. Whether it was instruction or entertainment, they were mutually assisting to each other, and they found Antonio to be in every thing their equal, perhaps in some things their superior. The scene was now changed. In the midst of their family and relations, possessed of the adventitious, though dazzling qualities of rank and fortune, the real merit of Antonio was hardly perceived. They now found him to be in some things their inferior. This alone would have, in time, put an end to their intimacy, unless, like many others, he would have contented himself with acting the part of an humble attendant. Having once opened to their views the career of ambition, and the prospect of rising in the state, they estimated their friendships by the extent of their political influence. Virtue and merit were now out of the question, or were at best but secondary considerations. Former services, compared to the objects in which they were now engaged, sunk to nothing; at the same time, a consciousness of duty led them to behave civilly to a man they had once esteemed, and who had done nothing to forfeit their good opinion. Perhaps, even if applied to in a fortunate moment, when impelled by a sudden emanation of half-extinguished virtue, they might have exerted themselves to serve him; but these exertions would not have been of long continuance; they would soon have been smothered by cold political prudence.

After two years' solicitation, during which his patrons sometimes cajoled him with promises, and, at others, hardly deigned to take notice of his request, Antonio gave up all hopes of success. His fortune was now totally gone. His friends in Scotland had frequently informed him of this; but he continued to solicit and to receive small sums of

money from time to time, which he was in hopes of being soon able to repay. These hopes being extinguished, he could not ask for more. He had also contracted several debts to the different tradesmen he employed. He frankly told them his situation; but they remembered the liberality of his conduct and behaviour in the days of his prosperity, and would not use the barbarous right of imprisonment to increase his calamities.

The accumulated distress, to which Antonio was now exposed, was more than he could bear. After combating some time with the agitation of his mind, he was seized with a slow fever, attended with a delirium, which made it necessary to acquaint his friends. His sister Leonora hastened to his relief. At the end of some weeks, his health was so far re-established, that she ventured to propose his undertaking a journey to Scotland; to which he at last consented, but not without reluctance.

He learned, by degrees, that the money he received for the last two years he resided in London, had come from Leonora; that she had paid all his debts there, and, with the small remains of her fortune, had purchased an annuity of an hundred and fifty pounds for his and her own life. In a short time they retired to a village in the county of ———, not far from my father's residence, who had been an early acquaintance of Antonio's. My father joined his endeavours to those of Leonora to recover him from that depression of spirits into which his misfortunes, and the reflection on his past conduct, had thrown him. They at last succeeded, and saw him, with pleasure, regain those mild and engaging manners, which they had formerly admired. But his spirit and vivacity could not be restored. He seemed to engage in the usual pastimes and occupations of a country life rather with patience than satisfaction, and to suffer society as a duty which he owed to a

sister who had preserved him, and to those friends who showed so much solicitude for his happiness, rather than to enjoy it as a source of pleasure and entertainment to himself. If ever he was animated, it was in the company of a few young men, who looked up to him for instruction. He entertained them, not with murmurings against the world, or complaints of the injustice or depravity of mankind: his pictures of society were flattering and agreeable, as giving the most extensive scope for the exercise of the active virtues. "My young friends," he was wont to say, "carry with you into the world a spirit of independence, and a proper respect for yourselves. These are the guardians of virtue. No man can trust to others for his support, or forfeit his own good opinion with impunity. Extravagant desires and ill-founded hopes pave the way for disappointment, and dispose us to cover our own errors with the unjust accusation of others. Society is supported by a reciprocation of good offices; and though virtue and humanity will give, justice cannot demand a favour, without a recompence. Warm and generous friendships are sometimes, nay, I hope, often found in the world; but in those changes and vicissitudes of life, which open new views, and form new connections, the old are apt to be weakened or forgotten. Family and domestic friendships," would he add, with a sigh, "will generally be found the most lasting and sincere: but here, my friends, you will think me prejudiced; you all know my obligations to Leonora."

Antonio and Leonora are now no more; he died a few days after my last visit. His sister he had buried about a twelvemonth before; and I have often heard him mention, with a kind of melancholy satisfaction, that, to her other distresses, there had not been added the regret of being left behind him.

Saturday, February 5.

“ TO THE AUTHOR OF THE MIRROR.

“ SIR,

“ THE praises of friendship, and descriptions of the happiness arising from it, I remember to have met with in almost every book and poem since first I could read. I was never much addicted to reading; and, in this instance, I think, I have little reason to put confidence in authors. How it may be in their experience I know not; but in mine, this same virtue of friendship has tended very little to my happiness; on the contrary, Sir, when I tell you my situation, you will find that I am almost ruined by my friends.

“ From my earliest days I was reckoned one of the best-natured fellows in the world; and, at school, though I must confess I did not acquire so much learning as many of my companions, yet, even there, I was remarkable for the acquisition of friends. Even there, too, I acquired them at some expense: I was flogged, I dare say, an hundred times for the faults of others, but was too generous ever to peach; my companions were generous fellows too; but it always happened, I don't know how, that my generosity was on the losing side of the adventure.

“ I had not been above three years at college, when the death of an uncle put me in possession of a very considerable estate. As I was not violently inclined towards literature, I soon took the opportunity, which this presented me, of leaving the university, and entering upon the world. I put myself under the tuition of one of my companions, who generally spent the vacations, and indeed some of the terms too, in London, and took up my residence in that city. There I needed not that propensity, which I have told you I always possessed, to acquire a multitude

of friends ; I found myself surrounded by them in every tavern and coffee house about town. But I soon experienced, that though the commodity was plenty the price was high. Besides a considerable mortgage on my estate, of which one of my best friends contrived to possess himself, I was obliged to expose my life in a couple of duels, and had very near lost it by disease, in that course of friendship, which I underwent in the metropolis. All this was more a social sacrifice to others than a gratification to myself. Naturally rather of a sober disposition, I found more frequently disgust than pleasure amidst those scenes of dissipation in which I was engaged. I was often obliged to roar out a catch expressive of our happiness, at the head of a long table in a tavern, though I would almost have exchanged my place for the bench of a galley slave ; and to bellow for a bumper, when I would as soon have swallowed the bitterest drug in the shop of my apothecary.

“ From this sort of bondage I contrived to emancipate myself by matrimony. I married the sister of one of my friends, a girl good-natured and thoughtless like myself, with whom I soon after retired into the country, and set out upon what we thought a sober, well-regulated plan. The situation was so distant, as to be quite out of the reach of my former town companions ; provisions were cheap, and servants faithful : in short, every thing so circumstanced, that we made no doubt of living considerably within our income. Our manner of life, however, was to be as happy as prudent. By the improvement of my estate I was to be equally amused and enriched ; my skill in sportsmanship (for I had acquired that science to great perfection at the university) was to procure vigour to my constitution and dainties to my table ; and, against the long nights of winter, we were provided with an excellent neighbourhood.

“The last-mentioned article is the only one which we have found come entirely up to our expectations. My talent for friend-making has indeed extended the limits of neighbourhood a good deal farther than the word is commonly understood to reach. The parish, which is not a small one,—the country, which is proportionally extensive, comes all within the denomination of neighbourhood with us; and my neighbour Goostry, who pays me an annual sporting visit of several weeks, lives at least fifty miles off.

“Some of those neighbours, who always become friends at my house, have endeavoured to pay for their entertainment with their advice as to the cultivation of my farm, or the management of my estate; but I have generally found their counsel, like other friendly exertions, put me out of pocket in the end. Their theories of agriculture failed in my practice of them; and the ingenious men they recommended to me for tenants seldom paid their rent by their ingenuity. One gentleman, in particular, was so much penetrated by my kindness and hospitality, that he generously communicated to me a project he had formed, which he showed me to be infallible, for acquiring a great fortune in a very short time, and offered me an equal share in the profits, upon my advancing the sum of five hundred pounds, to enable him to put his plan more speedily into execution. But, about a twelvemonth after, I was informed, that his project had miscarried, and that my five hundred pounds were lost in the wreck of it. This gentleman is almost the only one of my friends, who, after having been once at my house, does not choose to frequent it again.

“My wife is not a whit less happy in acquiring friends than myself. Besides all her relations, of whom (for I chose a woman of family) she has a very great number, every lady she meets at visits,

at church, or at the yearly races in our county-town, is so instantaneously charmed with her manners and conversation, that she finds it impossible to leave our part of the country without doing herself the pleasure of waiting on Mrs. Hearty at her own house. Mrs. Hearty's friends are kind enough to give advice too, as well as mine. After such visits, I generally find some improvement in the furniture of my house, the dress of my wife, or the livery of my servants.

"The attentions of our friends are sometimes carried farther than mere words or visits of compliment; yet even then, unfortunately, their favours are just so many taxes upon us. When I receive a present of a delicate salmon, or a nice haunch of venison, it is but a signal for all my good neighbours to come and eat at my expense; and some time ago, when a nephew of my wife, settled abroad, sent me an hogshead of excellent claret, it cost me, in entertainments for the honour of the liquor, what might have purchased a tun from the wine-merchant.

"After so many instances in which my friendships were hurtful to my fortune, I wished to hit on the way of making some of them beneficial to it. For this purpose, my wife and I have, for a good while past, been employed in looking out for some snug office, or reversion, to which my interest with several powerful friends might recommend me. But, somehow or other, our expectations have been always disappointed; not from any want of inclination in our friends to serve us, as we have been repeatedly assured, but from various unforeseen accidents, to which expectations of that sort are particularly liable. In the course of these solicitations, I was led to engage in the political interest of a gentleman, on whose influence I built the strongest hopes of success in my own schemes; and I flattered myself, that, from the friendly footing on which I stood with my neighbours, I might be of considerable service to him.

This, indeed, he is extremely ready to acknowledge, though he has never yet found an opportunity of returning the favour; but, in the mean time, it kept my table open to all his friends as well as my own, and cost me, besides, a head-ache twice a week, during the whole period of the canvas.

“In short, Mr. Mirror, I find I can afford to keep myself in friends no longer. I mean to give them warning of this my resolution as speedily as possible. Be so good, therefore, as inform such of them as read your paper, that I have shut my gates, locked my cellar, turned off my cook, disposed of my dogs, forgot my acquaintance, and am resolved henceforward, let people say of me what they will, to be no one’s friend but my own.

“I am, &c.

“JOHN HEARTY.”

Saturday, March 11.

“TO THE AUTHOR OF THE MIRROR.

“SIR,

“MY father was a farmer in a tolerably reputable situation. I was his eldest son; and, at the age of six years, I was sent to the parish school, to be taught reading and writing. My father naturally made inquiries concerning my progress, and the schoolmaster gave him the most flattering accounts. After I had spent the usual time in learning to read and write, my master said, it would be a pity to cut short a boy of my genius, and advised my father to allow me to remain a year or two longer at his school, that I might get a little Latin. This flattered my father’s vanity, as it put his son in a situation to appear somewhat above that of the children of the neighbouring farmers. I was allowed to sit on the same bench at school with our landlord’s son, and I had sometimes the honour to be whipped for his

faults. In studying Latin I spent three years. The account which my father received of my progress in that language, led him to follow my teacher's suggestion, to give me a little Greek. Having gone thus far, the transition was easy ; it would be a pity, said our sanguine advisers, to lose all the knowledge I had got ; with my application, and my genius, if I prosecuted my studies, I might become a very learned, and a very great man. If I studied divinity (which was proposed), I might, in time, preach in the pulpit of the very parish in which my father lived ; nay, I might rise to be a Professor in the University, or become Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

“ I was accordingly entered a student in the university. My father considered my fortune as now made ; and my expectations were not inferior to his. But I soon found my situation at the university a very hard and uneasy one. My father had been able to supply me tolerably with necessaries at the parish school : but to do this at the university, situated in a great and expensive town, was above his power. I was obliged to walk about, therefore, with a shabby coat and with an empty purse. I could not attend all the lectures I wished, for want of money to purchase admission, or to procure the necessary books. I now likewise found, that, far from being more knowing than my college companions, as my country schoolmaster flattered me would be the case, most of them knew more than I did ; they had been better taught, and had profited accordingly. Poverty, want of books, of friends, and of the other conveniencies of life, were not circumstances very well suited for the study of the beauties of Homer and Virgil, nor for making a progress in the abstract sciences ; but, with all these difficulties, I gave such close and intense application, that I was able to pick up a good deal of learning, and my diligence drew the attention of some of the professors. By their

interest I was recommended to Mr. M., a gentleman of considerable fortune, who resided in the town where the university is situate, to be tutor to his children; and accordingly he was pleased to engage me at the salary of twenty pounds a year, with the additional advantage of living in his house. I now thought the world was all before me; and every thing seemed to flatter me with present happiness and future exaltation. Out of my salary I hoped to afford to be better dressed, to buy more books, and to attend more lectures. I expected, from the knowledge I had acquired, to be able to make a figure in the company which resorted to Mr. M.'s. I doubted not that they would single me out as a prodigy of learning and genius; that, by their favour, I might be recommended to some lucrative or honourable place; or, at least, that I should, by Mr. M.'s interest, be settled as a minister in some church, after having pleasantly spent a year or two in his family, in attending to my pupils, from whose progress and improvement I expected equal pleasure and reputation. How these hopes have been answered I proceed to inform you.

“When I entered into Mr. M.'s family, I found it was expected, that I should not only attend to the studies of the eldest son, a lad of about fourteen, but that I was likewise to take care of all the younger children, consisting of no fewer than six. Some of these were to be taught to read; others, who were too young for that, I was to look after, and walk out with them when they went abroad, to keep them out of harm's way, to prevent them from falling into a ditch, or being run down by a carriage. This I saw must occupy my whole time; and every thought of reading for my own improvement was to be laid aside. But though, in this manner, a temporary stop was to be put to my learning, I still flattered myself I should make it up by the improve-

ment and knowledge of the world I should acquire from the society and conversation at Mr. M.'s. But this expectation was as vain as the former. When there were strangers of distinction at the house, I was not allowed to sit at table, but was placed in a corner of the room with the younger children, where my province was to attend to what they eat, and to cut their meat for them. When the family were alone, or the guests were such as Mr. M. did not think necessary to treat with much ceremony, I was permitted to sit at table; but I soon found, even when this was the case, that I was not to be permitted to talk there. Seldom, indeed, was there any conversation which was worth joining in; but when any occurred in which I ventured to join, what I said was received in such a manner, that I was obliged to resolve to be silent. If I threw in an observation, which started a doubt of the justice of any thing that was said, I was considered as an impertinent, conceited fellow, who had no right to express his doubts; if I endeavoured to support any opinion, I saw I was deemed officious and troublesome. Mr. M., who, to the credit the world justly gave him for a great fortune, wished also to add the reputation, though without any pretensions, of learning, was afraid, when I opened my mouth, lest people should think that his son's tutor was more knowing than he; and, therefore, took care always to contradict me flatly, and with an air of superiority; and sometimes even made a joke of that awkwardness of manner, which it was impossible one in my situation could have escaped. You may judge what effect this treatment must have upon one who can relish the beauties of the classics, and has read many of the most eminent French and English authors. Poor, helpless, and dependent as I am, something within tells me that I am superior—but I have no title to be proud.

“ For some time, the only pleasant moments, which I had in Mr. M.’s family, were those employed in reading with my eldest pupil. But this continued a very short time. The young gentleman soon began to despise one, whom he saw his father and his father’s friends treat with so much disrespect ; and instead of following my directions, took care to do the very reverse of whatever I desired him. I perceived also he made me the subject of jest with his companions. In vain did I endeavour to represent this in the gentlest manner to Mr. M. I was the worse used for my complaints ; he ascribed his son’s little progress to my remissness ; not to any fault in the boy, who, I soon found, had much more influence with his father, in regard to his education, than I had.

“ Such, Mr. Mirror, is my situation with the upper members of the family. With those of an inferior rank it is not a whit more agreeable. John, the footman, receives a salary nearly equal to mine, and he wears a better coat. He, therefore, looks upon himself as a finer gentleman than me ; and, as I am but little respected by those whom he considers as his betters, he does not think himself bound to respect me at all. At dinner, he seldom hears when I call ; and when he does, I often get fish-sauce to my pudding, and pepper instead of sugar to my pancakes. Nor is John to be blamed for this ; for he sees his master give me port or punch, while he and his guests drink claret. For some time, indeed, after I came to reside in the family, I received much complaisance from Mrs. Deborah Hitchcock, the housekeeper. Mrs. Deborah is now considerably past her fortieth year ; in her person thick and squabby, with a mouth a little awry, and eyes a little asquint. Mrs. Deborah frequently sends her compliments, and asks me to drink tea with her, or invites me to evening entertainments with her

gossiping companions. She is sometimes also so kind as to visit me in my own apartment, says she wonders I do not tire when alone; that she and I, from our situation in the family, should be companions to each other; and she has several times hinted, that, by her long residence in Mr. M.'s, she has acquired a sum which might be of use to a young man like me.

"Thus, Sir, have I given you a view of my situation in Mr. M.'s family for more than two years past that I have resided in it. My pupil is doing no good under my care. I am not respected in the family; the servants insult me; and my farther progress in learning is stopped. I have often resolved to give up my place; but what will become of me if I do? Others will not enter into my motives; they will attribute my conduct to folly or ill-temper; and I shall be thrown upon the wide world without a friend, without money, and with a mind ill calculated to struggle with poverty and misfortunes. It has occurred to me, that, if you print this letter, and Mr. M. chance to see it, it may produce some change in my situation; or, if it has no other effect, it may at least serve as a justification of my conduct in leaving his family. I am, &c.

"K. B."

The case of Mr. K. B. may perhaps be exaggerated; but I suspect his situation is not altogether uncommon. Indeed, I have been often surprised to see men of excellent sense in every other particular, and fond of their children, so inattentive to those who have the care of them. It should not, methinks, require much reflection to convince them, that there is a good deal of respect due to those on whom so important a trust as the education of their children is devolved; it should require but little observation to satisfy them, that, unless the parents regard the

tutor, it is impossible the children can ; that, unless the instructor be honoured, his precepts will be contemned. Even independent of these considerations, something is due to a young man of education and of learning, who, though his situation may make it necessary for him to receive a salary for his labours, may, from that learning which he has received, and that taste which it has given him, have a mind as independent as the wealthiest, and as delicate as the highest born.

But, while I venture to suggest those hints to such gentlemen as may be in a situation to afford tutors for their children, I would recommend the perusal of Mr. B.'s letter to persons in that condition from which he has sprung. I have of late remarked with regret, in this country, a disposition in many, who, from their station and circumstances, ought to have been bred farmers or manufacturers, to become scholars, and men of learned professions. Let such persons and their parents be assured, that, though there may be a few singular instances to the contrary, there is no pursuit which requires a competency, in point of fortune, more than that of a man of learning. A young man who has not enough to make him easy, and to bear the expense requisite for carrying on his education, can hardly be expected to rise to any eminence. The meanness of his situation will humble and depress him, and render him unfit for any thing elegant or great ; or, if this should not be the case, there is much danger of his becoming a prey to anxiety and chagrin, and perhaps passing a neglected and a miserable life. K. B. seems to have suffered much ; he may still have much to suffer ; had he followed his father's profession, he might have been both happy and useful.

Saturday, March 25.

LOOKING from the window of a house where I

was visiting some mornings ago, I observed on the opposite side of the street a sign post, ornamented with some little busts and bronzes, indicating a person to live there, by trade a figure-maker. On remarking to a gentleman who stood near me, that this was a profession I did not recollect having heard of before, my friend, who has a knack of drawing observations from trifles, and, I must confess, is a little inclined to take things on their weak side, replied, with a sarcastic smile, that it was one of the most common in life. While he spoke, a smart young man, who has lately set up a very showy equipage, passed by in his carriage at a brisk trot, and bowed to me, who have the honour of a slight acquaintance with him, with that air of civil consequence which puts me in mind of the notice a man thinks himself entitled to. "That young gentleman," said my friend, "is a Figure-maker, and the chariot he drives in is his sign post. You might trace the brethren of this trade through every street, square, and house in town. Figure-making is common to all ranks, ages, tempers, and situations: there are rich and poor, extravagant and narrow, wise and foolish, witty and ridiculous, eloquent and silent, beautiful and ugly Figure-makers. In short, there is scarce any body such a cypher from Nature, as not to form some pretensions to making a figure in spite of her.

"The young man who bowed to you is an extravagant Figure-maker, more remarkable from being successor to a narrow one. I knew his father well, and have often visited him in the course of money transactions, at his office, as it was called, in the garret-story of a dark airless house, where he sat, like the Genius of Lucre, brooding in his hole over the wealth his parsimony had acquired him. The very ink with which he wrote was adulterated with water, and he delayed mending his pen till the characters it formed were almost illegible. Yet he

too had great part of his enjoyment from the opinion of others, and was not insensible to the pleasures of Figure-making. I have often seen him in his threadbare brown coat, stop on the street to wait the passing of some of his well-dressed debtors, that he might have the pleasure of insulting them with the intimacy to which their situations entitled him; and I once knew him actually lend a large sum, on terms less advantageous than it was his custom to insist upon, merely because it was a peer, who wanted to borrow, and that he had applied in vain to two right honourable relations of immense fortune.

“ His son has just the same desire of showing his wealth that the father had; but he takes a very different method of displaying it. Both, however, display, not enjoy their wealth, and draw equal satisfaction from the consequence derived from it in the opinion of others. The father kept guineas in his coffers which he never used; the son changes, indeed, the species of property, but has just as little the power of using it. He keeps horses in his stable, mistresses in his lodgings, and servants in livery, to no better purpose than his father did guineas. He gives dinners, at which he eats made-dishes that he detests, and drinks Champagne and Burgundy, instead of his old beverage of port and punch, till he is sick, because they are the dishes and drink of great and rich men. The son’s situation has the advantage of brilliancy, but the father’s was more likely to be permanent; he was daily growing richer with the aspect of poverty; his son is daily growing poorer, with the appearance of wealth.

“ It is impossible to enumerate the pranks which the sudden acquisition of riches, joined to this desire of Figure-making, sets people a-playing. There is nothing so absurd or extravagant, which riches, in the hands of a weak man, will not tempt him to

commit, from the mere idea of enjoying his money in the way of exhibition. Nay, this will happen to persons of whose sense and discretion the world had formerly a high opinion, even where that opinion was a just one; for wealth often makes fools where it does not find them." My friend happening to cast his eye towards me at that moment, discovered a smile on my countenance: "You are thinking now," said he, "that you and I could endure being left twenty or thirty thousand pounds, notwithstanding the truth of my observation." "It would spoil your lecture," I replied; "but you may go on in the mean time." He took the pinch of snuff, which my remark had stopped in its progress towards his nose, and went on.

"From this motive of Figure-making," continued he, turning to the ladies of the company, "Beauty puts on her airs, and Wit labours for a bon mot, till the first becomes ugly, and the latter tiresome. You may have frequently observed Betsy Ogle, in a company of her ordinary acquaintance, look charmingly, because she did not care how she looked, till the appearance of a gentleman, with a fine coat or a title, has set her a tossing her head, rolling her eyes, biting her lips, twisting her neck, and bringing her whole figure to bear upon him, till the expression of her countenance became perfect folly, and her attitudes downright distortion. In the same way our friend Ned Glib (who has more wit than any man I know, could he but learn the economy of it), when some happy strokes of humour have given him credit with himself and the company, will set out full tilt, mimicking, caricaturing, punning, and story-telling, till every body present wishes him dumb, and looks grave in proportion as he laughs.

"That wit and beauty should be desirous of making a figure is not to be wondered at, admiration being the very province they contend for. That

folly and ugliness should thrust themselves forward to public notice, might be matter of surprise, did we not recollect that their owners most probably think themselves witty and handsome. In these, indeed, as in many other instances, it unfortunately happens, that people are strangely bent upon making a figure in those very departments where they have least chance of succeeding.

“ But there is a species of animal, several of whom must have fallen under the notice of every body present, which it is difficult to class, either among the witty or the foolish, the clever or the dull, the wise or the mad, who, of all others, have the greatest propensity to Figure-making. Nature seems to have made them up in haste, and to have put the different ingredients, above referred to, into their composition at random. They are more common in such a place as this, than in a more extensive sphere; like some vermin, that breed in ponds and rivulets, which a larger stream or lake would destroy. Our circle is just large enough to give their talents room, and small enough to be affected by their exertion. Here, therefore, there is never wanting a junto of them of both sexes, who are liked or hated, admired or despised, who make people laugh, or set them asleep, according to the fashion of the time, or the humour of their audience, but who have always the satisfaction of talking themselves, and of being talked of by others. With us, indeed, a very moderate degree of genius is sufficient for this purpose; in small societies, folks are set agape by small circumstances. I have known a lady here contrive to make a figure for half the winter, on the strength of a plume of feathers, or the trimming of a petticoat; and a gentleman make shift to be thought a fine fellow, only by outdoing every body else in the thickness of his *queue*, or the height of his foretop.

“ But people will not only make themselves fools;

I have known instances of their becoming knaves, or, at least, boasting of their being so, from this desire of Figure-making. You shall hear a fellow, who has once got the character of being a sharp man, tell things of himself, for which, if they had been true, he deserved to be hanged, merely because his line of Figure-making lies in trick and chicanery; hence, too, proceed all those histories of their own profligacy and vice, which some young men of spirit are perpetually relating, who are willing to 'record themselves villains,' rather than not be recorded at all.

"In the arts, as well as in the characters of men, this same propensity is productive of strange disorders. Hence proceed the bombast of poetry, the tumour of prose, the garish light of some paintings, the unnatural *chiaro scuro* of others; hence, in music, the absurd mixture of discordant movements and the squeak of high-strained cadences; in short, all those sins against nature and simplicity, which artists of inferior merit are glad to practise, in order to extort the notice of the public, and to make a figure by surprise and singularity."

The accidental interruption of a new visitor now stopped the current of my friend's discourse; he had, indeed, begun to tire most of the company, who were not all disposed to listen quite so long as he seemed inclined to speak. In truth, he had forgot that the very reproof he meant to give his neighbours applied pretty strongly to himself, and that, though he might suppose he was lecturing from the desire of reformation, he was, in reality, haranguing in the spirit of Figure-making.

Select Papers

FROM THE

L O U N G E R.

Select Papers

FROM THE

L O U N G E R.

Saturday, February 26, 1785.

Laudatur temporis acti.

JUVENAL.

“GET thee a place, for I must be idle,” says Hamlet to Horatio at the play. It is often so with me at public places: I am more employed in attending to the spectators than to the entertainment: a practice, which, in the present state of some of our entertainments, I frequently find very convenient. In me, however, it is an indolent, quiet sort of indulgence, which, if it affords some amusement to myself, does not disturb that of any other body.

At an assembly at which I happened to be present a few nights ago, my notice was peculiarly attracted by a gentleman with what is called a fresh look for his age, dressed in a claret-coloured coat with gold buttons, of a cut not altogether modern, an embroidered waistcoat with very large flaps, a major wig, long ruffles nicely plaited (that looked however as if the fashion had come to them rather than that they had been made for the fashion); his white silk stockings ornamented with figured clocks, and his shoes with high insteps, buckled with small round gold buckles. His sword, with a silver hilt somewhat tarnished, I might have thought only an article of his dress, had not a cockade in his hat

marked him for a military man. It was some time before I was able to find out who he was, till at last my friend Mr. S ——— informed me he was a very worthy relation of his, who had not been in town above twice these forty years; that an accidental piece of business had lately brought him from his house in the country, and he had been prevailed on to look on the ladies of Edinburgh at two or three public places before he went home again, that he might see whether they were as handsome as their mothers and grandmothers, whom he had danced with at balls, and squired to plays and concerts, near half a century ago. "He was," continued my friend, "a professed admirer and votary of the sex; and when he was a young man fought three duels, for the honour of the ladies, in one of which he was run through the body, but luckily escaped with his life. The lady, however, for whom he fought, did not reward her knight as she ought to have done, but soon after married another man with a larger fortune; upon which he forswore society in a great measure, and though he continued for several years to do his duty in the army, and actually rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, mixed but little in the world, and has for a long space of time resided at his estate a determined bachelor, with somewhat of misanthropy, and a great deal of good-nature about him. If you please I will introduce you to him. Colonel Caustic, this is a very particular friend of mine, who solicits the honour of being known to you." The Colonel kissed me on both cheeks; and seeming to take a liking to my face, we appeared mutually disposed to be very soon acquainted.

Our conversation naturally began on the assembly, which I observed to be a full one. "Why, yes," said the Colonel, "here is crowd enough, and to spare; and yet your ladies seem to have been at a loss for partners. I suppose the greatest part of the

men, or rather boys, whom I see now standing up to dance, have been brought in to make up a set, as people in the country sometimes fill up the places in a dance with chairs, to help them to go through the figure. But as I came too late for the minuets, I presume the dressed gentlemen walked up stairs after they were ended." "Why, Sir, there are now-a-days no minuets." "No minuets!" looking for a while at the company on the floor, "I don't wonder at it." "Why perhaps, Colonel," said I, "these young gentlemen have not quite an aspect serious enough for the pas grave; and yet yonder is one standing with his back to the fire—" "Why, yes, there is something of gravity, of almost melancholy on his face." "Yes, melancholy and gentleman-like," said I, "as Mr. Stephen in the play has it." "Why, that young man, Sir, now that I have observed him closer, with that roll of handkerchief about his neck, his square-cut striped vest, his large metal buttons and nankeen breeches, — Why, Sir, 'tis a stable-boy out of place!"

"Pray, who are those gentlemen," said Colonel Caustic, "who have ranged themselves in a sort of phalanx at the other end of the room, and seem, like the devil in Milton, to carry stern defiance on their brow?" "I have not the honour of their acquaintance," I replied; "but some of them, I presume, from the cockades in their hats"—"You do not say so," interrupted the Colonel. "Is that the military air of the present day? But you must be mistaken; they cannot be real soldiers: militia, or train-band subalterns, believe me, who, having neither seen service nor good company, contrive to look fierce, in order to avoid looking sheepish. I remember indeed of old, some of our boys used to put on that fierce air in coffee houses and taverns; but they could never dream of wearing it before the ladies." "I think, however," said Mr. S——,

smiling, "the ladies don't seem much afraid of them." "Why your ladies," answered the Colonel, "to say truth, have learned to look people in the face. During the little while I have been in town, I have met with some in my walks, in great coats, riding hats, and rattans, whom I could not show an eye to: but I am newly come from the country; I shall keep a better countenance by and by."

At that moment a lady and her party, for whose appearance the dancers were waiting, were just entering the room, and seemed in a great hurry to get forward. Their progress however was a good deal impeded by a tall, stout young man, who had taken his station just at the threshold, and leaning his back against one of the door-posts, with his right foot placed firm on the end of a bench, was picking his teeth with a perfect nonchalance to every thing around him. I saw the Colonel fasten a very angry look on him, and move his hand with a sort of involuntary motion towards my cane. The ladies had now got through the defile, and we stood back to make way for them. "Was there ever such a brute?" said Colonel Caustic. The young gentleman stalked up to the place where we were standing, put up his glass to his eye, looked hard at the Colonel, and then—put it down again. The Colonel took snuff.

"Our sex," said I, "Colonel, is not perhaps improved in its public appearance; but I think you will own the other is not less beautiful than it was." He cast his eye round for a few minutes before he answered me. "Why, yes," said he, "Sir, here are many pretty, very pretty girls. That young lady in blue is a very pretty girl. I remember her grandmother at the same age; she was a fine woman." "But the one next her, with the fanciful cap, and the panache of red and white feathers, with that elegant form, that striking figure, is not she a

fine woman?" "Why, no, Sir, not quite a fine woman; not quite such a woman, as a man (raising his chest as he pronounced the word man, and pressing the points of his three unemployed fingers gently on his bosom), as a man would be proud to stake his life for."

"But, in short, Sir," continued he, "I speak to you because you look like one that can understand me. There is nothing about a woman's person merely (were she formed like the *Venus de Medicis*), that can constitute a fine woman. There is something in the look, the manner, the voice, and still more the silence, of such a one as I mean, that has no connection with any thing material; at least no more than just to make one think such a soul is lodged as it deserves. In short, Sir, a fine woman,—I could have shown you some examples formerly. I mean, however, no disparagement to the young ladies here; none upon my honour; they are as well made, and if not better dressed, at least more dressed than their predecessors; and their complexions I think are better. But I am an old fellow, and apt to talk foolishly."

"I suspect, Caustic," said my friend Mr. S——, "you and I are not quite competent judges of this matter. Were the partners of our dancing days to make their appearance here, with their humble foretops and brown unpowdered ringlets." "Why, what then, Mr. S——?" "Why, I think those high heads would overtop them a little, that's all." "Why, as for the panache," replied the Colonel, "I have no objection to the ornament itself; there is something in the waving movement of it that is graceful, and not undignified; but in every sort of dress there is a certain character, a certain relation which it holds to the wearer. Yonder now, you'll forgive me, Sir," turning to me, "yonder is a set of girls, I suppose from their looks and

their giggling, but a few weeks from the nursery, whose feathers are in such agitation, whisked about, high and low, on this side and on that." "Why, Sir, 'tis like the Countess of Cassowar's menagerie scared by the entrance of her lapdog."

"As to dress indeed in general," continued the Colonel, "that of a man or woman of fashion should be such as to mark some attention to appearance, some deference to society. The young men I see here, look as if they had just had time to throw off their boots after a fox chase. But yet dress is only an accessory, that should seem to belong to the wearer, and not the wearer to it. Some of the young ladies opposite to us are so made up of ornaments, so stuck round with finery, that an ill-natured observer might say, their milliner had sent them hither, as she places her doll in her shop-window, to exhibit her wares to the company."

Mr. S—— was going to reply, when he was stopped by the noise of a hundred tongues, which approached like a gathering storm from the card room. 'Twas my Lady Rumpus, with a crowd of women and a mob of men in her suite. They were people of too much consequence to have any of that deference for society which the Colonel talked of. My nerves, and those of my friend S——, though not remarkably weak, could barely stand their approach; but Colonel Caustic's were quite overpowered. We accompanied him in his retreat out of the dancing room; and after drinking a dish of tea, by way of sedative, as the physicians phrase it, he called for his chair, and went home.

While we were sitting in the tea room, Mr. S—— undertook the apology of my Lady Rumpus and her followers. "We must make allowance," said he, "for the fashion of the times. In

these days, precision of manners is exploded, and ease is the mode." "Ease!" said the Colonel, wiping his forehead. "Why, in your days," said Mr. S——, "and I may say in mine too, for I believe there is not much betwixt us, were there not sometimes fantastic modes, which people of rank had brought into use, and which were called genteel, because such people practised them, though the word might not just apply to them in the abstract?" "I understand you, S——," said the Colonel, "there were such things; some irregularities that broke out now and then. There were mad-caps of both sexes, that would venture on strange things; but they were in a style somewhat above the canaille: ridiculous enough, I grant you, but not perfectly absurd: coarse, it might be, but not downright vulgar. In all ages, I suppose, people of condition did sometimes entrench themselves behind their titles or their high birth, and committed offences against what lesser folks would call decorum, and yet were allowed to be well-bred all the while; were sometimes a little gross, and called it witty; and a little rude, and called it raillery: but it was false coinage, and never passed long. Indeed, I have generally remarked, that people did so only because they could not do better; it is the pleading privilege for a debt which a man's own funds do not enable him to pay. A great man may perhaps be well-bred in a manner which little people do not understand; but, trust me, he is a greater man who is well-bred in a manner that every body understands."

Saturday, May 28.

"TO THE AUTHOR OF THE LOUNGER.

"SIR;

"IF I am not misinformed, you have taken

up the same sort of business which was formerly carried on by a gentleman who published his performances under the title of the Mirror, with whom I had once or twice occasion, not very agreeable, to correspond. As I suppose you have got that gentleman's good-will, I am inclined to deal with you as his successor; and I trust you will use me as well as he did, by giving place to this letter, containing an account of grievances, which I know not where else to find redress for. You will find my correspondence, though not elegant, at least authentic. The family of the Homespuns, though I say it, who should not, were always to be trusted in a story; truth and plain dealing was their motto, and I hope will continue so, if bad neighbours don't spoil them.

"The neglect of the great lady, which my daughter Elizabeth thought fit to complain of in the Mirror, was of singular use in my family. My young lady came back to the country so quiet and so reasonable a girl, that her mother and I had not once occasion to chide her for a twelvemonth; at the end of which we had proposals of marriage for her from her uncle's partner, whom she mentions in the paper I allude to; and she consented to become the wife of a plain, virtuous, thriving young man, though he had nothing of finery or fashion about him. They are as happy as can be, and have two stout cherry-cheeked boys, who, I am told, are the pictures of their grandfather.

"The rest of us remain as we were; at least we did so till within these two months. My Lady ——— made some overtures towards a renewal of our acquaintance about a twelvemonth ago: but it was agreed to decline them; and I staid at home to lay down a field of spring wheat, instead of going to vote for a parliament man. The waists of my wife and daughters had returned to their

natural size, and the heads of the latter had moulted of their feathers. Their hoops were sent to the lumber garret, and powder and pomatum were scarcely ever used but on Sundays. I fondly thought, that all the follies of the family were over, and that henceforth we should be reasonable and happy. Alas, Sir, I have discovered, that opportunity only was wanting to renew them; the weeds were all in the ground, though my Lady——'s coldness had chilled their growth. Within these two months they have sprung up with a vengeance.

“About that time, my neighbour Mushroom's son, who had been sent out to India about a dozen years ago, returned home with a fortune, as we are told, of £.100,000, and has taken up his residence at his father's, till some finer place shall be found out for him. Before his arrival, he had made several large remittances to his father, for the purpose of dressing up the old house a little, so as to make it fit for his reception, and had sent a trunk full of fineries to dress up his mother and sisters for the same purpose. The good old lady, however, restrained her daughters from wearing them (as indeed they did not well know how to make them up or put them on), till her son should arrive. His arrival furnished them with a very able assistant: the young man had made a love match before he left this country, with a good looking girl of our neighbourhood, who, not altogether with his inclination, had gone out to him soon after his establishment in India. This lady returned hither with him, and has edified all the family amazingly.

“But her instructions are not confined to her own family: mine is unluckily included. This is a favour which my wife is very proud of: as Mrs. Mushroom has forgot most of her old ac-

quaintance in the parish, and associates only with us, and one or two more of her neighbours, who have what she calls capability, that is, Sir, as I understand it, who will listen to all the nonsense she talks, and ape all the follies she practises. These are strong words; but it will put any man in a passion to see how she goes on. I don't know how it is, but I am ten times angrier at this new plague than I was with Lady ———. For her I had many apologies; but to think of that little chit Peg Mushroom playing all this mischief among us! — why, Sir, I remember her but as it were yesterday, when she used to come draggled to our house of a morning afoot, and ride home double on my blind mare, behind one of the plough-boys.

“ But I interrupt my account of things, in my anger at them. The Sunday after these new comers' arrival, they appeared in church, where their pew was all carpeted and cushioned over for their reception, so bedizened — there were flowered muslins and gold muslins, white shawls and red shawls, white feathers and red feathers; and every now and then the young Mushroom girls pulled out little bottles that sent such a perfume around them! Nay, my old friend, their father, like a fool as he was, had such a mixture of black satin and pink satin about him, and was so stiff and awkward in his finery, that he looked for all the world like the King of Clubs, and seemed, poor man! to have as little to say for himself.

“ But all this, Sir, is no joking matter to me. Some of the neighbours, indeed, laugh at it; but we, who are favourites, say that it is nothing but envy. My wife and daughter Mary have rummaged out their tetes and feathers; and the hoops, that had suffered a little from the

moths, have been put in complete repair again. I was silly enough to let my wife get hold of a draught on town for the price of my last year's barley; and I verily believe she and Mary alone carry the produce of ten acres on their backs. My wife said a shawl was a decent comfortable wear for a middle-aged woman like her (my Rachel, by the way, has been fifty these ten years); and so she gave orders to purchase one at a sale in town, which she got a monstrous bargain, though I am ashamed to tell, that it stood me in two fat oxen and a year old cow.

“I am glad to take this estimate of things, because in the value of money we are now got into a style of expression which loses all idea of small sums. Hundreds and thousands of pounds carried a sound of some importance, and could easily be divided into lesser parts; but Madam Mushroom's lack, or half a lack, sounds like nothing at all; and she has stories, which she tells to my poor gaping girls, of a single supper in the East, given by some Nabob with half a dozen hard names, that cost one or two of those lacks, besides half a lack in trifling presents to the company. In those stories, the East Indian lady, being subject to no contradiction, goes on without interruption or commentary, till my poor wife and daughters' heads are turned quite topsy turvy. Even mine, though reckoned tolerably solid, is really dizzy with hearing her. There are such accounts of Nabobs, Rajahs, and Rajah Pouts, elephants, palanquins, and processions; so stuck full of gold, diamonds, pearls, and precious stones, with episodes of dancing girls and otter of roses!—I have heard nothing like it since I was a boy, and used to be delighted with reading the Arabian Nights Entertainments.

“ The effect of all this on my family you will easily guess. Not only does it rob me of my money but them of their happiness. Every thing, that used to be thought comfortable or convenient formerly, is now intolerable and disgusting. Every thing we now put on, or eat, or drink, is immediately brought into comparison with the dress, provisions, and liquors at Mushroom Hall, for so they have new christened my neighbour’s farm house. My girls’ home made gowns, of which they were lately so proud, have been thrown by with contempt since they saw Mrs. Mushroom’s muslins from Bengal; our barn door fowls we used to say were so fat and well tasted, we now make awkward attempts, by garlic and pepper, to turn into the form of Curries and Pee-laws: and the old October we were wont to treat all our neighbours with, none of the family but myself will condescend to taste, since they drank Mr. Mushroom’s India Madeira.

“ In short, Sir, I am ten times worse off with this fresh disaster than I was with the former unlucky intimacy with Lady ———. My Lady ——— was at some distance in point of place, and still more in point of rank from us; but this new plague is close at our doors, and Mrs. Mushroom is so obliging as to be a constant visitor. I am really afraid that I must sell my little estate, and leave this part of the country altogether; that I must try to find out some new place of residence, where Nabobs, Rajahs, and Lacks of Rupees, were never heard of, and where people know no more of Bengal than of the Man in the Moon.

“ I am, &c.

“ JOHN HOMESPUN.”

Saturday, September 17.

I MENTIONED in my last paper, that my friend Colonel Caustic and I had accepted an invitation to dine with his neighbour Lord Grubwell. Of that dinner I am now to take the liberty of giving some account to my readers. It is one advantage of that habit of observation, which, as a thinking Lounger, I have acquired, that, from most entertainments I can carry something more than the mere dinner away. I remember an old acquaintance of mine, a jolly carbuncle-faced fellow, who used to give an account of a company by the single circumstance of the liquor they could swallow. At such a dinner was one man of three bottles, four of two, six of a bottle and a half, and so on; and as for himself, he kept a sort of journal of what he had pouched, as he called it, at every place to which he had been invited during a whole winter. My reckoning is of another sort; I have sometimes carried off from a dinner, one, two, or three characters, swallowed half a dozen anecdotes, and tasted eight or ten insipid things, that were not worth the swallowing. I have one advantage over my old friend: I can digest what, in his phrase, I have pouched, without a headach.

When we sat down to dinner at Lord Grubwell's, I found that the table was occupied in some sort by two different parties, one of which belonged to my Lord, and the other to my Lady. At the upper end of my Lord's sat Mr. Placid, a man agreeable by profession, who has no corner in his mind, no prominence in his feelings, and, like certain chemical liquors, has the property of coalescing with every thing. He dines with every body that gives a dinner, has seventeen cards for the seven days of the week, cuts up a fowl, tells a story, and hears a story

told, with the best grace of any man in the world. Mr. Placid had been brought by my Lord, but seemed inclined to desert to my Lady, or rather to side with both, having a smile on the right cheek for the one, and a simper on the left for the other.

Lord Grubwell being a patron of the fine arts, had, at his board end, besides the layer out of his grounds, a discarded fiddler from the opera house, who allowed that Handel could compose a tolerable chorus; a painter, who had made what he called fancy portraits of all the family, who talked a great deal about Corregio; a gentleman on one hand of him, who seemed an adept in cookery; and a little blear-eyed man on the other, who was a connoisseur in wine. On horseflesh, hunting, shooting, cricket, and cock-fighting, we had occasional dissertations from several young gentlemen at both sides of his end of the table, who, though not directly of his establishment, seemed, from what occurred in conversation, to be pretty constantly in waiting.

Of my lady's division the most conspicuous person was a gentleman who sat next her, Sir John ———, who seemed to enjoy the office of her Cicisbeo, or Cavaliere servente, as nearly as the custom of this country allows. There was, however, one little difference between him and the Italian Cavaliere, that he did not seem so solicitous to serve as to admire the lady, the little attentions being rather directed from her to him. Even his admiration was rather understood than expressed. The gentleman, indeed, to borrow a phrase from the grammarians, appeared to be altogether of the passive mood, and to consider every exertion as vulgar and unbecoming. He spoke mincingly, looked something more delicate than man; had the finest teeth, the whitest hand, and sent a perfume around him at every motion. He had travelled, quoted Italy very often, and called this a tramontane country, in which, if it

were not for one or two fine women, there would be no possibility of existing.

Besides this male attendant, Lady Grubwell had several female intimates, who seemed to have profited extremely by her patronage and instructions, who had learned to talk on all town subjects with such ease and confidence, that one could never have supposed they had been bred in the country, and had, as Colonel Caustic informed me, only lost their bashfulness about three weeks before. One or two of them, I could see, were in a professed and particular manner imitators of my lady, used all her phrases, aped all her gestures, and had their dress made so exactly after her pattern, that the Colonel told me a blunt country-gentleman, who dined there one rainy day, and afterwards passed the night at his house, thought they had got wet to the skin in their way, and had been refitted from her ladyship's wardrobe. "But he was mistaken," said the Colonel, "they only borrowed a little of her complexion."

The painter had made a picture, of which he was very proud, of my lady, attended by a group of those young friends, in the character of Diana, surrounded by her nymphs, surprised by Acteon. My lady, when she was showing it to me, made me take notice how very like my Lord Acteon was. Sir John, who leaned over her shoulder, put on as broad a smile as his good-breeding would allow, and said it was one of the most monstrous clever things he had ever heard her ladyship say.

Of my lord's party there were some young men, brothers and cousins of my lady's nymphs, who showed the same laudable desire of imitating him, as their kinswomen did of copying her. But each end of the table made now and then interchanges with the other; some of the most promising of my lord's followers were favoured with the countenance

and regard of her ladyship; while, on the other hand, some of her nymphs drew the particular attention of Acteon, and seemed, like those in the picture, willing to hide his Diana from him. Amidst those different, combined, or mingled parties, I could not help admiring the dexterity of Placid, who contrived to divide himself among them with wonderful address. To the landscape gardener he talked of clumps and swells; he spoke of harmony to the musician, of colouring to the painter, of hats and feathers to the young ladies, and even conciliated the elevated and unbending Baronet, by appeals to him about the quay at Marseilles, the Corso at Rome, and the gallery at Florence. He was once only a little unfortunate in a reference to Colonel Caustic, which he meant as a compliment to my lady, "how much more elegant the dress of the ladies was now-a-days than formerly when they remembered it?" Placid is but very little turned of fifty.

Caustic and I were nearly "mutes and audience to this act." The colonel indeed now and then threw in a word or two of that *dolce piccante*, that sweet and sharp sort in which his politeness contrives to convey his satire. I thought I could discover that the company stood somewhat in awe of him; and even my lady endeavoured to gain his good will by a very marked attention. She begged leave to drink his sister's health in a particular manner after dinner, and regretted exceedingly not being favoured with her company. "She hardly ever stirs abroad, my lady," answered the Colonel; "besides," looking slyly at some of her ladyship's female friends, "she is not young, nor, I am afraid, bashful enough for one of Diana's virgins."

When we returned home in the evening, Caustic began to moralise on the scene of the day. "We were talking," said he to me, "t'other morning, when you took up a volume of Cook's Voyages, of

the advantages and disadvantages arising to newly discovered countries from our communication with them; of the wants we show them along with the conveniencies of life; the diseases we communicate along with the arts we teach. I can trace a striking analogy between this and the visit of Lord and Lady Grubwell to the savages here, as I am told they often call us. Instead of the plain wholesome fare, the sober manners; the filial, the parental, the family virtues, which some of our households possessed, these great people will inoculate extravagance, dissipation, and neglect of every relative duty; and then, in point of breeding and behaviour, we shall have petulance and inattention, instead of bashful civility, because it is the fashion with fine folks to be easy; and rusticity shall be set off with impudence, like a grogram waiscoat with tinsel binding, that only makes its coarseness more disgusting."

"But you must set them right, my good Sir," I replied, "in these particulars. You must tell your neighbours, who may be apt, from some spurious examples, to suppose that every thing contrary to the natural ideas of politeness is polite, that in such an opinion they are perfectly mistaken. Such a caricature is indeed, as in all other imitations, the easiest to be imitated; but it is not the real portraiture and likeness of a high-bred man or woman. As good dancing is like a more dignified sort of walk, and as the best dress hangs the easiest on the shape; so the highest good-breeding, and the most highly polished fashion, is the nearest to nature, but to nature in its best state, to that *belle nature* which works of taste (and a person of fashion is a work of taste) in every department require. It is the same in morals as in demeanour; a real man of fashion has a certain *retenue*, a degree of moderation in every thing, and will not be more wicked or dissipated than there is occasion for; you must

therefore signify to that young man, who sat near me at Lord Grubwell's, who swore immoderately, was rude to the chaplain, and told us some things of himself for which he ought to have been hanged, that he will not have the honour of going to the devil in the very best company."

"Were I to turn preacher," answered the Colonel, "I would not read your homily. It might be as you say in former times; but in my late excursions to your city, I cannot say I could discover, even in the first company, the high polish you talk of. There was nature, indeed, such as one may suppose her in places which I have long since forgotten; but as for her beauty or grace, I could perceive but little of it. The world has been often called a theatre; now the theatre of your fashionable world seems to me to have lost the best part of its audience; it is all either the yawn of the side boxes, or the roar of the upper gallery. There is no pit (as I remember the pit), none of that mixture of good-breeding, discernment, taste, and feeling, which constitutes an audience, such as a first-rate performer would wish to act his part to. For the simile of the theatre will still hold in this farther particular, that a man to be perfectly well-bred must have a certain respect and value for his audience, otherwise his exertions will generally be either coarse or feeble. Though indeed a perfectly well-bred man will feel that respect even for himself; and were he in a room alone," said Caustic, taking an involuntary step or two, till he got opposite to a mirror that hangs at the upper end of his parlour, "would blush to find himself in a mean or ungraceful attitude, or to indulge a thought gross, illiberal, or ungentleman-like." "You smile," said Miss Caustic to me; "but I have often told my brother, that he is a very Oroondates on that score; and your Edinburgh people may be very well-bred, without coming up to his standard." "Nay, but,"

said I, "were I even to give Edinburgh up, it would not affect my position. Edinburgh is but a copy of a larger metropolis; and everywhere the defect I mentioned is apt to take place: and of all qualities I know, this of fashion and good-breeding is the most delicate, the most evanescent, if I may be allowed so pedantic a phrase. 'Tis like the flavour of certain liquors, which it is hardly possible to preserve in the removal of them." "Oh! now I understand you," said Caustic, smiling in his turn; "like Harrowgate water, for example, which I am told has spirit at the spring; but when brought hither, I find it, under favour, to have nothing but stink and ill taste remaining."

Discipulus est prioris posterior dies.

SEN.

THE Lounger, having now "rounded one revolving year," may consider himself as an acquaintance of some standing with his readers, and, at this period of gratulations, may venture to pay them the compliments of the season with the freedom of intimacy and the cordiality of friendship. In the life of a periodical essayist, a twelvemonth is a considerable age. That part of the world in which his subject lies, he has then had an opportunity of viewing in all its different situations; he has seen it in the hurry of business, in the heyday of amusement, in the quiet of the country; and he now attends it in its course of Christmas festivity and holiday merriment.

Yet I know not how it is, that amidst the gratulations and festivity of this returning season, I am sometimes disposed to hear the one, and partake the other, with a certain seriousness of mind not well suited to the vacancy of the time: to look on the jollity around me with an eye of thought, and to

impress, in my imagination, a tone of melancholy on the voices that wish me many happy years.

As men advance in life, the great divisions of time may indeed furnish matter for serious reflection, as he who counts the money he has spent, naturally thinks of how much a smaller sum he has left behind. Yet, for my own part, it is less from anxiety about what remains of time, than from the remembrance of that which is gone, that I am led into this "mood of pensiveness." In my hours of thoughtful indolence, I am not apt to conjure up phantoms of the future; 'tis with a milder sort of melancholy that I sometimes indulge in recalling the shades of the past. To this perhaps the Lounger's manner and habits of life naturally incline him. To him leisure gives frequent occasion to review his time, and to compare his thoughts. By the Lounger a few ideas, natural and congenial to his mind, are traced through all their connections; while the man of professional industry and active pursuit has many that press upon him in succession, and are quickly dismissed. He who lives in a crowd gains an extensive acquaintance, but little intimacy; the man who possesses but a few friends, enjoys them much, and thinks of them often.

Time mellows ideas as it mellows wine. Things in themselves indifferent acquire a certain tenderness in recollection; and the scenes of our youth, though remarkable neither for elegance or feeling, rise up to our memory dignified at the same time and endeared. As countrymen in a distant land acknowledge one another as friends, so objects, to which when present we gave but little attention, are nourished in distant remembrance with a cordial regard. If in their own nature of a tender kind, the ties which they had on the heart are drawn still closer, and we recal them with an enthusiasm of feeling which the same objects at the immediate

time are unable to excite. The ghosts of our departed affections are seen through that softening medium, which, though it dims their brightness, does not impair their attraction: like the shade of Dido appearing to Æneas: —

“ *Agnovitque per umbram
Obscuram, qualem primo qui surgere mense
Aut videt, aut vidisse putat per nubila lunam;
Dimisit lacrymas, dulcique affatus amore est.*”

The hum of a little tune to which in our infancy we have often listened; the course of a brook which, in our childhood, we have frequently traced; the ruins of an ancient building which we remember almost entire; these remembrances sweep over the mind with an enchanting power of tenderness and melancholy, at whose bidding, the pleasures, the business, the ambition of the present moment fade and disappear.

Our finer feelings are generally not more grateful to the fancy than moral to the mind. Of this tender power, which remembrance has over us, several uses might be made; this divinity of memory, did we worship it aright, might lend its aid to our happiness as well as to our virtue.

An amiable and ingenious philosopher has remarked, that in castle-building no man is a villain*. In like manner it may perhaps be pronounced, that every man is virtuous in recollection; he rests with peculiar satisfaction on the remembrance of such actions as are most congenial to the better parts of his nature, on such pleasures as were innocent, on such designs as were laudable. It were well if, amidst the ardour of pursuit, or the hopes of gratification, we sometimes considered that the present will be future, as well as that the future will be

* Dr. Reid, in his *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*.

present, that we anticipated reflection as well as enjoyment. Not only in those greater and more important concerns, which are what Shakspeare calls "Stuff o' the conscience," but in the lesser and more trivial offices of life, we should be more apt to conduct ourselves aright, did we think that we were one day to read the drama in which we now perform; and that of ourselves, and the other personages of the scene, we were to judge with a critical severity.

This indulgence of memory, this review of time, would blunt the angry and discordant passions that often prey on our own quiet as well as on the peace of others. Scarce any man is so hard of heart as to feel himself an enemy over the grave of his foe; and the remembrance of contests, however just, with those, who are now no more, comes across an ingenuous mind with a sort of self-accusation. The progress of time, though it may not have swept our adversaries from the earth, will probably have placed both them and us in circumstances such as to allay, if not to extinguish, our resentment. Prosperity to us, or misfortunes to them, may have soothed our anger into quiet or softened it to pity. The lessons of time may have taught us, what wisdom or prudence once preached to us in vain, that the object of our contention was not worth the struggle of the contest, that we mistook the value of the prize, or did injustice to the motives of our competitors; or perhaps we have altered those sentiments in which we were formerly so warm, and forsaken those tenets we were once so positive to maintain. The hand of time, imperceptible in its touch, steals the colour from our opinions; and, like those who look on faded pictures, we wonder at having formerly been struck with their force.

Though it is wisely ordered by Providence, that we should not pause in the pursuits of life to think

of its shortness, or undervalue every attainment from the uncertainty of its duration when attained; yet such a consideration may fairly enough mitigate a blamable eagerness in the chace, or a blamable depression from its disappointment. I was very well pleased with the philosophy of an old soldier, whom I once met with in the environs of London, leaning on a crutch, and rather accepting than soliciting the aid of the charitable. He told me, not without some importunity on my part, the hardships and the dangers he had encountered; the number of his campaigns, the obstinacy of his engagements, the length of his sieges; "yet I failed in getting Ghelsea," said he, "because I was rendered incapable of the service in consequence of a rheumatism contracted in a winter encampment; and, more than all that, because my wife, somehow or other, had disoblged my commanding officer. But I forget and forgive, as the saying is; and, thanks to such as your honour, I can make shift to live. It is true, I have seen others get halberts, ay, and commissions too, that were not better men than myself: but that don't signify. It will be all the same an hundred years hence." Without all the happy stoicism of the soldier, we may often soothe the pangs of envy, and the pinings of discontent, by the consideration of that period, when they shall cease to disquiet, when time shall have unplumed the pageantry of grandeur, narrowed the domains of wealth, and withered the arm of power.

Nor will this philosophy of time convey a less important lesson to the successful than to the unfortunate. It will moderate the luxurious indulgence of the rich, and restrain the wanton or useless exertions of the powerful. Every one, who can look back on a moderately long life, will remember a succession of envied possessors of wealth and influence, whose luxury a thousand flatterers were wishing to share, whose favour a crowd of dependents

were striving to obtain. Let those, who now occupy their place, attend to the effects of that wealth enjoyed, of those favours bestowed. Let them cast up the sum of pleasure which was produced by the one, of gratitude or self-satisfaction procured by the other. If there are any whom elevation has made giddy, or power rendered insolent, let them think how long that elevation can endure, how far that power can extend; let them consider in how short a space the influence of their predecessors has ceased to be felt, how soon their appointments have made room for the appointments of others; how few of their dependents and favourites survive, and of those few how very small a part acknowledge their benefactor. If some of the actions of such eminent persons there are which the world still remembers with approbation, and individuals own with gratitude, they are probably such as, in this review of the past, it will be useful for their successors to observe and to imitate. Those have obtained a victory over time, which is the noblest excitement and animation to virtue; that honest fame, of which the consciousness gives its highest enjoyment to the present, which the future can neither reproach nor overcome.

Saturday, January 21.

“ TO THE AUTHOR OF THE LOUNGER.

“ SIR,

“ I WAS much pleased with one of your late papers, published on the last day of last year, in which you suggested several uses that might be made of a recollection of past events, and of a proper consideration of the power of time.

“ The neglect of the improvement of time is an evil of which every moralist has complained, on which therefore it were presumption in me to at-

tempt to enlarge. But, without repeating what has been so often and so well said on its waste or its abuse, permit me to take notice of that forgetfulness of its progress, which affects the conduct and deportment of so many in the different relations of life. In matters of serious concern, we cannot violate the rights of time without rendering ourselves unhappy; in objects of smaller importance, we cannot withdraw from its jurisdiction without making ourselves ridiculous. Its progress, however, is unfortunately very apt to be unnoticed by ourselves, to whom its daily motion is gradual and imperceptible; but by others it will hardly fail to be marked, and they will expect a behaviour suitable to the character it should stamp upon us.

“How often do the old forget the period at which they are arrived, and keep up a behaviour suitable, or perhaps only excusable to that which they have long ago passed? We see every day sexagenary beaux, and grey-haired rakes, who mix with the gay and the dissipated of the present time, and pride themselves on the want of that thought and seriousness which years alone, if not wisdom, should have taught them. This is the pitiful ambition of the weak and the profligate; who, unable to attain the respect due to virtue, or the credit of usefulness, wish to show the vigour of their minds, and the soundness of their constitutions, at a late period of life, by supporting a character of folly or licentiousness. But they should be told, that they generally fail in their object, contemptible as it is; the world only allows them credit for an attempt at follies, for an affectation of vice. “What a fine wicked old dog your father is!”—said a young fellow in my hearing, at the door of a tavern a few nights ago. “Why, yes,” replied his companion, with a tone of sang froid, “he would if he could.”

“In the other sex, I confess I feel myself more inclined to make allowance for those rebels against

time, who wish to extend the period of youth beyond its natural duration. The empire of beauty is a distinction so flattering, and its resignation makes so mortifying a change in the state of its possessor, that I am not much surprised if she, who has once enjoyed it, tries every art to prolong her reign. This indulgence, however, is only due to those who have no other part to perform, no other character to support. She, who is a wife or a mother, has other objects to which her attention may be turned, from which her respectability may be drawn. I cannot therefore easily pardon those whom we see at public places the rivals of their daughters, with the airy gait, the flaunting dress, and the playful giggle of fifteen. As to those elderly ladies who continue to haunt the scenes of their early amusements, who sometimes exhibit themselves there in all the gay colours of youth and fashion, like those unnatural fruit trees that blossom in December, I am disposed rather to pity than to blame them. In thus attending the triumphs of beauty, they may be of the same use with the monitor who followed the Roman heroes in their triumphal processions, to put them in mind, amidst the shouts of the people, and the parade of conquest, that, for all their glory, they were still but men.

“ But the progress of time is often anticipated as it is forgotten, and youth usurps the privileges of age as frequently as age would retain the privileges of youth. At no period, perhaps, was this prematurity of behaviour more conspicuous than at present. We have boys discoursing politics, arguing metaphysics, and supporting infidelity, at an age little beyond that when they are used to be playing at taw and leap-frog. Nor are these the most hurtful of their pretensions. In vice, as in self-importance they contrive to get beyond “ the ignorant present time ;” and, at the years of boyishness, to be perfect men in licentiousness and debauchery.

It is much the same with the young people of the female world. Girls, who formerly used to be found in the nursery, are now brought forward to all the prerogatives of womanhood. To figure at public places, to be gallanted at public walks, to laugh and talk loud at both, to have all the airs, and all the ease of a fine lady, are now the acquirements of misses, who, in my younger days, Mr. Lounger, were working their samplers, learning white seam, or were allowed to spoil a mince pie, by way of an exercise in pastry; and it is no uncommon thing now-a-days, to see in the corner of a ball-room at midnight, leaning on the arm of her partner, and now and then answering some of his speeches with a rap of her fan, the same ungrown girl, who, not a great many years ago, would have curtesied to the company, kissed papa and mamma, and gone to bed supperless between eight and nine in the evening. In both sexes the "*ingenuus pudor*," the becoming modesty and reserve, which were formerly the most pleasing characteristics of youth, seem now to be exploded: they have forgot to blush; and the present rule of manners is such, that their parents do not blush for them. I confess, Sir, it is not without some indignation that I frequently see fathers and mothers smiling with complacency and pride on their children, for saying and doing things for which, in my time, they would have been turned out of the room. But I am an old man, apt, perhaps, to complain and be peevish. That I may not incur the other charge of the poet, the garrulity of age, I beg leave to conclude, by assuring you that I am, Sir, your admirer and humble servant,

"SENEX."

After the severity of Senex's reprehension of the present times, on which he certainly has not looked

with a favourable eye, it may be a relief to my readers, to read a letter of a lighter sort, received from another correspondent, from whom the same paper, to which Senex refers, has drawn the following proposal : —

“ TO THE AUTHOR OF THE LOUNGER.

“ SIR,

“ I had the honour of reading your paper for the New Year, setting forth the natural reflections to which that returning period should give rise, and the moral uses of the recollection of past events. I am one, Sir, not much given to serious reflections, yet I acknowledge the use of remembrance, provided it does not go back an unreasonable time, and takes in only a certain set of events. I have long been an attendant and admirer of the fashionable world ; and do not, indeed, think it worth my while to carry my philosophy down to the lower orders of the people. Of the fashionable world, I presume I need not inform you, Sir, that the New Year does not begin at the 1st of January ; it used to be computed from the 18th ; but this year, from some particular incidents, it is not, I believe, intended that it should begin so early. About the beginning of February, people will think of dating the commencement of the New Year, and may perhaps indulge the propensity you suppose, to recollect the events of the old. Of this, persons of fashion have the greater need, as their years suffer an interruption unknown to the natural ; they exist merely, in a state of oblivion, in the country, for five or six months of summer and autumn, and may therefore be very well supposed to forget the transactions of the last year, which ended so long a while before the present began. I would propose, Sir, to help their memories by a sort of moral memorandum book, which I doubt not, as you are a philosopher

and a moralist, will meet with your approbation. My memorandum book, however, will consist chiefly of things which they must remember to forget. I subjoin a few of the proposed memoranda, by which you may judge of the utility of the whole.

“In the first place, then, people of fashion will please to

——forget Nature as much as possible.

Such of them as have not had the advantage of keeping in practice the rules of a polite education, during the summer months, at some of the watering places, will have been apt to let the rusticity of nature creep upon them. They may have learned several bad habits, which they must now by all means forget; such as, laughing at a merry, or crying at a moving tale; being themselves happy with happiness, or sad with sorrow; being pleased with the attentions of others, or pleasing others by their attentions; in short, a great many sincerities which might do well enough in the country, but which, like other natural productions, the winter always kills, among people of fashion, in a town.

“They will, secondly, remember to

——forget their country acquaintance.

They may have received or bestowed many rural civilities, which it would be very improper to recollect here, and may meet with bows and curtesies from very old or very good sort of people (for the terms are nearly synonymous), which they are to return only with a broad stare of surprise at the freedom used with them. If they have been so rusticated as not to find courage for that, the thing may be accomplished by forgetting their eye sight; for which purpose they may resume their opera glasses, which it is probable have lain quietly in their drawers since their departure from town.

“It is a memorandum similar to the above, to put

them in mind that married persons of both sexes are to

—— forget their husbands, wives, and children.

There is a manifest indecorum, or rather, perhaps, indecency, in the remembrance of such connections, of which no truly polite person will ever be guilty.

“ A direction somewhat akin to this is that of

—— forgetting their fortunes,

of which the remembrance, when it interferes with the demands of pleasure, or of gaiety, is one of the most vulgar and mechanical things in the world. It will, at any rate, be time enough to indulge it at the end of the season, when they may possibly be put in mind of it by other people. As they are, indeed, uniformly to shun all plebeian qualities, it is indispensable for them to

—— forget their modesty.

A proper confidence in ourselves is one of the truest marks of having lived among persons of condition. Neither knowledge, genius, valour, nor virtue can bestow it; 'tis so purely the gift of fashion and fashionable society, that the want of it is an absolute disqualification for the privileges which attend them.

“ Under this head of mental endowments, I may suggest the propriety of

—— forgetting their religion.

It is possible, that in the country they may have given way to some vulgar prejudices, which it were highly improper to retain in town. It may not be amiss, however, to inform them, in this place, what they might otherwise have scrupled to believe, that the church has of late become a place of fashionable resort in Edinburgh; and, what is still more odd, that fine people actually attend to the sermon. The

eloquence of some of our preachers, like the dagger of Macbeth, has ‘murdered sleep’ there; for which reason, it will not be so convenient as formerly, to go thither after a late supper, or a long party at whist, the night before.

“ In point of external qualities, the ladies are to
—— forget their complexions.

In the morning they are to be much paler, and in the evening much more blooming than they were in the country. If other people remember them from the one period to the other, there is no help for it; — as things go now, it does not much signify. Very fine ladies may sometimes forget to dress at all; it will show ease, and a certain contempt for their company, to which people of high fashion are entitled.

“ On the subject of dress, I may add by way of caution, that the ladies would do well

—— not to forget themselves.

I don’t mean this in the common acceptation of the phrase, which it may be sometimes very proper and convenient to do. What I mean is simply to put them in mind, that a lady in town, in the modern dress, takes up so much more room than she does in the country, that very serious consequences might ensue from her not attending to the space which she necessarily occupies. An acquaintance of mine, who is somewhat of an antiquarian, observed to me, what an opinion our great grandchildren might be led to form of the size of the ladies’ heads towards the close of the eighteenth century, if any of the fashionable hats should happen to be preserved in the cabinets of the curious. But, in reply, I desired him to take notice that they would be set right as to the dimensions of the race by examining the walking-sticks of the men, which are just as much below

the medium standard as the hats of the other sex are beyond it. By the hats they might conjecture us to be bred of Patagonians; by the sticks, they would conclude us to be a generation of Laplanders.

“ But I find I am wandering from my subject. I must put myself in mind, that it is time to conclude this hasty scrawl, by having the honour to subscribe myself, with all possible consideration and respect,

“ Sir, your most obedient and

“ Most devoted humble Servant,

“ MEMORY MODISH.”

— *Sors ista Senectæ*
Debita.

VIRG.

IN every man's lot there are certain incidents, either regarding himself or those with whom he is closely connected, which, like mile-stones on a road, mark the journey of life, and call our attention both to that portion of it which we have already passed, and to that which it is probable we have still to go. The death or the marriage of a friend, his departure for a distant country, or his return from it, not only attract our notice to such events themselves, but naturally recal to our memories, and anticipate to our imaginations, a chain of other events connected with, or dependant upon them. Those little prominent parts of life stop the even and unheeded course of our ordinary thoughts; and, like him who has gained a height in his walk, we not only look on the objects which lie before us, but naturally turn to compare them with those we have left behind.

Though my days, as my readers may have gathered from the accounts I have formerly given, pass with as much uniformity as those of most men; yet there are now and then occurrences in them which

give room for this variety of reflection. Some such lately crossed me in the way; and I came home, after a solitary walk, disposed to moralise on the general tenor of life, to look into some of the articles of which it consists, and to sum up their value and their use. When Peter let me in, methought he looked older than he used to do. I opened my memorandum book for 1775. — I can turn over the leaves between that time and this (said I to myself) in a moment — thus! — and casting my eye on the blank paper that remained, began to meditate on the decline of life, on the enjoyments, the comforts, the cares, and the sorrows of age.

Of domestic comforts, I could not help reflecting how much celibacy deprives us; how many pleasures are derived from a family, when that family is happy in itself, is dutiful, affectionate, good-humoured, virtuous. I cannot easily account for the omission of Cicero, who, in his treatise "*de Senectute*," enumerates the various enjoyments of old age, without once mentioning those which arise from the possession of worthy and promising children. Perhaps the Roman manners and customs were not very much calculated to promote this: they who could adopt the children of others, were not likely to be so exclusively attached to their own, or to feel from that attachment a very high degree of pleasure; or, it may be, the father of Marcus felt something on the subject of children, of which he was willing to spare himself the recollection. But though a bachelor myself, I look with equal veneration and complacency on the domestic blessings of a good old man, surrounded by a virtuous and flourishing race, in whom he lives over the best days of his youth, and from whose happiness he draws so much matter for his own. 'Tis at that advanced period of life, that most of the enjoyments of a bachelor begin to leave him, that he feels the

solitariness of his situation, linked to no surrounding objects, but those from which the debility or the seriousness of age must necessarily divorce him. The club, the coffee house, and the tavern, will make but a few short inquiries after his absence: and weakness or disease may imprison him to his home, without their much feeling the want of his company, or any of their members soothing his uneasiness with theirs. The endearing society, the tender attentions of a man's own children, give to his very wants and weakness a sort of enjoyment, when those wants are supplied, and that weakness aided, by the hands he loves.

Though the celibacy of the female sex is still more reproached, and is thought more comfortless than that of ours, yet I confess it seems to me to possess several advantages of which the other is deprived. An old maid has been more accustomed to home and to solitude than an old bachelor, and can employ herself in many little female occupations which render her more independent of society for the disposal of her time and the amusement of her mind. The comparatively unimportant employments of the female world, which require neither much vigour of body nor much exertion of soul, occupy her hours and her attention, and prevent that impatience of idleness, or of inactivity, which so often preys on men who have been formerly busy or active. The negative and gentler virtues which characterise female worth, suit themselves more easily to the languid and suffering state of age or infirmity, than those active and spirit-stirring qualities which frequently constitute the excellence of the male character. There are, no doubt, some females to whom this will not apply; to whom age must be more terrible than to any other being, because it deprives them of more. She whose only endowment was beauty, must tremble at the ap-

proach of those wrinkles which spoil her of all : she to whom youthful amusements and gaieties were the whole of life, must dread more than death that period when they can be no longer enjoyed.

It need scarce be suggested, that, to lessen the evils, and increase the comforts of age in either sex, the surest means are to be found in the cultivation and improvement of the mind in youth : to have something, as it were, in bank, on which to subsist the mind when the sources of external supply are cut off : to allow it some room for its natural activity when external employments have ceased ; to preserve that energy of soul without which life is not only useless, but burdensome. The former exercise of the imagination creates numberless pleasures, and its former fondness prevents numberless evils to an old man. In proportion to the excellence of those objects over which it has formerly ranged, the review of age will be delightful or dreary, will call up elegant or gross, comfortable or distressing, elevating or humiliating, remembrances.

When I say, that, of this better cultivated old age, the remembrances will be more delightful, I do not mean that they will be always more gay. Of melancholy remembrances this state will naturally be more susceptible, than those in which memory has less store, and active employment tends more to dissipate thought. But who would exchange melancholy remembrances for the apathy of him who thinks only of the present ? Who would exchange, for unfeeling contentment, that creative memory which peoples the present time with past joys, past friendships, past love, though the recollection carries sadness along with it ? The most melancholy of all reflections which an old man can make, when he looks around him, and misses the companions of his youth, the associates of his active days, and exclaims, in the natural language of Petrarch, “ *Ed Io*

pur vivo!" — even in this, to one of a good and pious mind, there is a certain elevation above the world, that sheds (so to speak) a beam of heavenly light upon the darkness around him.

A late correspondent, under the signature of Atticus, pleases and interests me much, by a natural, though it is not a new description of the various occupations and feelings of his old age. After mentioning the chequered nature of his past life, on the dark side of which he places the loss of an excellent wife, and several promising children, "The memory of those dear objects," says he, "and the soothing hope that we shall soon meet again, is now the source of extreme pleasure to me. In my retired walks in the country, I am never alone: those dear shades are my constant companions." Shennstone, with a felicity which perhaps our language could not have afforded him, has expressed this feeling in eight or nine words, to the force and tenderness of which I believe no other words could add. 'Tis in the inscription on Miss Dolman's urn, "*Heu quanto minus est cum reliquis versari quam tui meminisse!*"

In recollecting those whom time has swept from our remembrance, there are some characters whom, though we less respected, and, reasonably speaking, must less regret, yet we cannot help remembering with a feeling, if not so tender, perhaps fully as sympathetic, as the loss of much more dignified personages might produce — "Alas, poor Yorick." — Even in what I have passed of life, I recal at this moment the jests, the sallies, the thoughtless gaiety of several such characters, with whom one cannot easily connect an idea so serious as that of death, whom I still wonder at not meeting in the accustomed haunts of their amusement, and cannot, without violence to my imagination, think of as gone for ever.

The regrets of the old for such companions may be the easier allowed, from the circumstance of their time of life preventing them from the acquisition of any such again. But though nothing less becomes an old man than the levity of youthful society and youthful amusements, yet to keep up such an interest in them as may preserve to himself the complacency of the young, and a certain enjoyment of their happiness, is one of the great ingredients of a happy old age. I smiled one day at seeing my friend Colonel Caustic busied in fitting up a fishing-rod for a schoolboy, the son of a neighbouring gentleman, who wished to go an angling on the stream that runs through the grounds. "You think me very foolishly employed," said the Colonel; "but do not blame me, till your philosophy can show a happier face of its making than my friend Billy's there."

Some old men forget that they are old, and some that they ever were young; the first are ridiculous in the imitation, the latter peevish in the restraint of youthful gaiety. This is, generally, the effect neither of good nature in the one, nor of wisdom in the other; but results, in the first, from a foolish vanity, and from an incapacity of those better employments and pleasures which suit their age; in the latter, from a splenetic regret of their incapacity for those employments and pleasures which suit it not.

Very different from this peevish intolerance of youth is that sort of gentle dissatisfaction with the present time, which some of the best-tempered old men are inclined to show. As a young man, I never complained of this partiality which my seniors discovered for their own times, or the injustices they sometimes did to the present. 'Tis on the warmest and worthiest hearts that the impression of the former age remains the deepest. The *prisci conscius ævi*, is one whom his coevals loved, and whom his

juniors, whom he sometimes underrates, should regard; as he, who is warmest in the cause of his absent friend, is the man whose friendship we should be most solicitous to gain. Perhaps it may be accounted a sort of proof of my approaching the period of partiality for the past, when I observe, that the present race of young men seem not likely ever to recal their younger days with the enthusiasm which some of my older acquaintance express for theirs. That indifference which modern fashion teaches her votaries, will have nothing hereafter to remember with delight, or to record with partiality. "What audience," said the same excellent friend whom I have quoted, "What audience will they find in the nineteenth century, for their eulogium of the size of buckles, the height of capes, or the fashion of boots in the year 1785?"

Of the foibles of age, avarice has long been cited as the most unreasonable and preposterous; yet, I think, it is much less to be wondered at, though not less to be blamed, than the declamation of moralists has generally supposed. When excluded from the pleasures which the use of money might procure, we substitute, if I may be allowed the expression, the archetype of enjoyment for enjoyment itself, and prize wealth as the end, when it has ceased to be the means. Old men are niggard of their money as they are profuse of their talk, because the possession of wealth is one of those pleasures in which they can equal younger men; as daws and starlings can pilfer and hoard, who are destitute of plumage and of song.

But there are uses of wealth which some worthy and wise old men discover, that may supply this want of object for its appropriation. To bestow it in the purposes of beneficence is one of the ways of spending money for which a man is never too old; or if some are so unhappy as to have outlived the

relish of this, it is only where they have been at little pains to keep up in their minds those better feelings, which prompt and reward good deeds. That pleasure which Colonel Caustic mentioned, of making happy faces, is a sort of fine art, which some people never attain, and others easily lose.

Saturday, December 30.

AMONG the cautions which prudence and worldly wisdom inculcate on the young, or at least among those sober truths which experience often pretends to have acquired, is that danger which is said to result from the pursuit of letters and of science, in men destined for the labours of business, for the active exertions of professional life. The abstraction of learning, the speculations of science, and the visionary excursions of fancy, are fatal, it is said, to the steady pursuit of common objects, to the habits of plodding industry which ordinary business demands. The fineness of mind, which is created or increased by the study of letters, or the admiration of the arts, is supposed to incapacitate a man for the drudgery by which professional eminence is gained : as a nicely-tempered edge, applied to a coarse and rugged material, is unable to perform what a more common instrument would have successfully achieved. A young man destined for law or commerce is advised to look only into his folio of precedents, or his method of book-keeping ; and dullness is pointed to his homage, as that benevolent goddess, under whose protection the honours of station, and the blessings of opulence, are to be attained ; while learning and genius are proscribed, as leading their votaries to barren indigence and merited neglect. In doubting the truth of these assertions, I think I shall not entertain any hurtful de-

gree of scepticism, because the general current of opinion seems of late years to have set too strongly in the contrary direction; and one may endeavour to prop the falling cause of literature, without being accused of blamable or dangerous partiality.

In the examples which memory and experience produce, of idleness, of dissipation, and of poverty, brought on by an indulgence of literary or poetical enthusiasm, the evidence must necessarily be on one side of the question only. Of the few whom learning or genius have led astray, the ill success or the ruin is marked by the celebrity of the sufferer. Of the many who have been as dull as they were profligate, and as ignorant as they were poor, the fate is unknown from the insignificance of those by whom it was endured. If we may reason *a priori* on the matter, the chances, I think, should be on the side of literature.

In young minds of any vivacity, there is a natural aversion to the drudgery of business, which is seldom overcome, till the effervescence of youth is allayed by the progress of time and habit, or till that very warmth is enlisted on the side of their professions, by the opening prospects of ambition or emolument. From this tyranny, as youth conceives it, of attention and of labour, relief is commonly sought from some favourite avocation or amusement, for which a young man either finds or steals a portion of his time, either patiently plods through his task, in expectation of its approach, or anticipates its arrival, by deserting his work before the legal period for amusement is arrived. It may fairly be questioned, whether the most innocent of those amusements is either so honourable or so safe, as the avocations of learning or of science. Of minds uninformed and gross, whom youthful spirits agitate, but fancy and feeling have no power to impel, the amusements will generally be either boisterous or effeminate, will either

dissipate their attention, or weaken their force. The employment of a young man's vacant hours is often too little attended to by those rigid masters who exact the most scrupulous observance of the periods destined for business. The waste of time is undoubtedly a very calculable loss; but the waste or the depravation of mind is a loss of a much higher denomination. The votary of study, or the enthusiast of fancy, may incur the first; but the latter will be suffered chiefly by him whom ignorance, or want of imagination, has left to the grossness of mere sensual enjoyments.

In this, as in other respects, the love of letters is friendly to sober manners and virtuous conduct, which in every profession is the road to success and to respect. Without adopting the common place reflections against some particular departments, it must be allowed, that in mere men of business, there is a certain professional rule of right, which is not always honourable, and, though meant to be selfish, very seldom profits. A superior education generally corrects this, by opening the mind to different motives of action, to the feelings of delicacy, the sense of honour, and a contempt of wealth, when earned by a desertion of those principles.

The moral beauty of those dispositions may perhaps rather provoke the smile, than excite the imitation, of mere men of business and the world. But I will venture to tell them, that, even on their own principles, they are mistaken. The qualities which they sometimes prefer as more calculated for pushing a young man's way in life, seldom attain the end, in contemplation of which they are not so nice about the means. This is strongly exemplified by the ill success of many, who, from their earliest youth, had acquired the highest reputation for sharpness and cunning; whose trickish qualities look to small ad-

vantages unfairly won, rather than to great ones honourably attained. The direct, the open, and the candid, are the surest road to success in every department of life. It needs a certain superior degree of ability to perceive and to adopt this; mean and uninformed minds seize on corners which they cultivate with narrow views to very little advantage; enlarged and well-informed minds embrace great and honourable objects; and, if they fail of obtaining them, are liable to none of those pangs which rankle in the bosom of artifice defeated, or of cunning over-matched.

To the improvement of our faculties, as well as of our principles, the love of letters appears to be favourable. Letters require a certain sort of application, though of a kind perhaps very different from that which business would recommend. Granting that they are unprofitable in themselves, as that word is used in the language of the world; yet, as developing the powers of thought and reflection, they may be an amusement of some use, as those sports of children in which numbers are used, familiarise them to the elements of arithmetic. They give room for the exercise of that discernment, that comparison of objects, that distinction of causes, which is to increase the skill of the physician, to guide the speculations of the merchant, and to prompt the arguments of the lawyer; and though some professions employ but very few faculties of the mind, yet there is scarce any branch of business in which a man who can think will not excel him who can only labour. We shall accordingly find, in many departments where learned information seemed of all qualities the least necessary, that those who possessed it in a degree above their fellows, have found, from that very circumstance, the road to eminence and to wealth.

But I must often repeat, that wealth does not necessarily create happiness, nor confer dignity; a truth which it may be thought declamation to insist on, but which the present time seems particularly to require being told. The influx of foreign riches, and of foreign luxury, which this country has of late experienced, has almost levelled every distinction but that of money among us. The crest of noble or industrious ancestry has sunk before the sudden accumulation of wealth in vulgar hands: but that were little, had not the elegance of manners, had not the dignity of deportment, had not the pride of virtue, which used to characterise some of our high-born names, given way to that tide of fortune, which has lifted the low, the illiterate, and the unfeeling, into stations of which they were unworthy. Learning and genius have not always resisted the torrent; but I know no bulwarks better calculated to resist it. The love of letters is connected with an independence and delicacy of mind, which is a great preservative against that fertile homage which abject men pay to fortune; and there is a certain classical pride, which, from the society of Socrates and Plato, Cicero and Atticus, looks down with an honest disdain on the wealth-blown insects of modern times, neither enlightened by knowledge, nor ennobled by virtue. The "*non omnis moriar*" of the poet draws on futurity for the deficiencies of the present; and even in the present, those avenues of more refined pleasure, which the cultivation of knowledge, of fancy, and of feeling, opens to the mind, give to the votary of science a real superiority of enjoyment in what he possesses, and free him from much of that envy and regret, which less cultivated spirits feel from their wants.

In the possession, indeed, of what he has attained, in that rest and retirement from his labours, with the

hopes of which his fatigues were lightened, and his cares were soothed, the mere man of business frequently undergoes suffering, instead of finding enjoyment. To be busy, as one ought, is an easy art; but to know how to be idle is a very superior accomplishment. This difficulty is much increased with persons to whom the habit of employment has made some active exertion necessary; who cannot sleep contented in the torpor of indolence, or amuse themselves with those lighter trifles in which he, who inherited idleness as he did fortune from his ancestors, has been accustomed to find amusement. The miseries and mortifications of the "retired pleasures" of men of business have been frequently matter of speculation to the moralist and of ridicule to the wit. But he, who has mixed general knowledge with professional skill, and literary amusement with professional labour, will have some stock wherewith to support him in idleness, some spring for his mind when unbent from business, some employment for those hours which retirement or solitude has left vacant and unoccupied. Independence in the use of one's time is not the least valuable species of freedom. This liberty the Man of Letters enjoys; while the ignorant and illiterate often retire from the thralldom of business, only to become the slaves of languor, intemperance, or vice.

But the situation, in which the advantages of that endowment of mind which letters bestow are chiefly conspicuous, is old age, when a man's society is necessarily circumscribed, and his powers of active enjoyment are unavoidably diminished. Unfit for the bustle of affairs and the amusements of his youth, an old man, if he has no source of mental exertion or employment, often settles into the gloom of melancholy and peevishness, or petrifies his feelings by habitual intoxication. From an old man, whose gratifications were solely derived from those sensual ap-

petites which time has blunted, or from those trivial amusements of which youth only can share, age has cut off almost every source of enjoyment. But to him who has stored his mind with the information, and can still employ it in the amusement of letters, this blank of life is admirably filled up. He acts, he thinks, and he feels with that literary world whose society he can at all times enjoy. There is perhaps no state more capable of comfort to ourselves, or more attractive of veneration from others, than that which such an old age affords; it is then the twilight of the passions, when they are mitigated but not extinguished, and spread their gentle influence over the evening of our days, in alliance with reason, and in amity with virtue.

Nor perhaps, if fairly estimated, are the little polish and complacencies of social life less increased by the cultivation of letters, than the enjoyment of solitary or retired leisure. To the politeness of form and the ease of manner, business is naturally unfavourable, because business looks to the use, not the decoration of things. But the man of business, who has cultivated letters, will commonly have softened his feelings, if he has not smoothed his manner or polished his address. He may be awkward, but will seldom be rude; may trespass in the ignorance of ceremonial, but will not offend against the substantial rules of civility. In conversation, the pedantry of profession unavoidably insinuates itself among men of every calling. The lawyer, the merchant, and the soldier (this last perhaps from obvious enough causes, the most of the three), naturally slide into the accustomed train of thinking, and the accustomed style of conversation. The pedantry of the man of learning is generally the most tolerable and the least tiresome of any; and he who has mixed a certain portion of learning with his ordinary profession, has generally corrected, in a

considerable degree, the abstraction of the one and the coarseness of the other.

In the more important relations of society, in the closer intercourse of friend, of husband, and of father, that superior delicacy and refinement of feeling, which the cultivation of the mind bestows, heighten affection into sentiment, and mingle with such connections a dignity and tenderness, which give its dearest value to our existence. In fortunate circumstances those feelings enhance prosperity; but in the decline of life, their influence and importance are chiefly felt. They smooth the harshness of adversity, and on the brow of misfortune print that languid smile, which their votaries would often not exchange for the broadest mirth of those unfeelingly prosperous men, who possess good fortune, but have not a heart for happiness.

THE END.

